THE COMMONWEAL

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MORTAR AND MANKIND

A PUBLIC speaker declared recently that a story is written on every human face, the child's open countenance being a blank book and the mature man's hardened features an autobiography. There is truth in the statement, no doubt; but it is still more correct to say that every home frames an epic or a drama the outcome of which helps to tell society what it is. Very likely it would be possible to write a fairly accurate interpretation of American life if one noted only the details and the changes registered by the history of homes. Did not the sudden mushroom growth of tenement districts and stifling slums indicate the swirl of industrialism into which the country plunged? The people housed there had come, for the most part, from peasant hovels or the ghetto. They were inured to hardship; they could have endured anything for the sake of the promise held out by the Eldorado beyond Ellis Island. Was not the habit prevalent among generations of farmers to pile their families into rickety shacks while the cattle lived in model barns a fairly good sign that farming was to be a temporary occupation from which the children would graduate into more urban circumstances? Last, but possibly most significant, was the drift of the American who had been accustomed to a parcel of land, a hearth and a garden, into those long lanes of towering apartments which testify to the nation's readiness to centralize its activities, to stake its all upon one great industrial and commercial gamble.

From the mere architectural outline one could infer, it seems to us, that tremendous wave of homelessness which has bred so much anti-social feeling and crime. No matter how widely radical persons may toy with the idea of the family, it remains the basic plot in which most human actors can achieve a happy ending. Something more than accident is responsible for the fact that the poetic word stanza means, originally, a house. A conventional form, to be sure; but inside it the visionary glow is safe from waste and sure of satisfactory fulfillment. And the more fully a stanza realizes the concept of form, the more capable does it prove of revealing the mysteries of language and emotion—those vast mysteries man accepts from nature but employs in his own higher, more spiritual way. It might just as well be said that the more fully the average home realizes the same concept of form, the more successfully are the hallowed things in which it is enshrined revealed. The idea that human beings can live under any kind of shelter is as perverse and as rooted in ignorance as any other kind of heresy. It is

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equivalent to saying that God was merely extravagant when He lavished so much glory on the original habitation of man. Materials combined with no reference to the principle of form brutalize by mere contact the human race. For they are like chaos in the sense that the spirit dwells not in them.

A great hope is held out, therefore, by the varied exhibitions of architectural and housing crafts now drawing popular attention in so many places. During recent years America has developed, through contact with Europe and in other ways, certain very promising decorative arts. The molding of iron, the weaving of tapestries, the construction and ornamentation of furniture have made strides until they are quite comparable with the elaborate, porcelain-covered cult of hygiene. A mere glance at rooms in which harmony reigns, in which the charm of meditative artisanship stands revealed in multiform color and line, ought to make a great many realize how very absorbing the art of home-building can become. Hundreds of people who dabble in writing or painting, without the slightest qualification for success in either, may be led to see the transcendent opportunity which awaits them within four walls. Neither they nor any of us ought to forget the marvelous fact that the home is the site of a sacrament, proceeding continually and benignly throughout the days of life. From this point of view it can be seen that the embellishment of a home is a work of the same kind as the beautifying of a church.

Mr. Irwin Edman allows his meditative young hero to surmise at Chartres that "you could leave your history and imagination behind and carry only a pair of eyes to be caught up by the piercing magic of that lingering blue in the west window and be hushed to tranquillity by those long brown aisles." No doubt the surmisal is correct, though there are other things at Chartres. But we have felt something of the same kind in simple German farm-houses, in less pretentious French châteaux—something that was mingled dignity and simplicity, human service and consciousness of the Divine Will. It seemed as if these places had been mellowed by generations of insight into the sacredness of mere living, of contact with the mystery of children. And until one can find it generally present in America (it does exist here and there) one cannot feel sure that the home is safe against the attacks of barbarism and license. It is not a question of aesthetics or nicely blended colors. It is merely a matter of finding evidence of the soul's presence.

Of course, the truth remains that until certain social barriers have been surmounted it will remain impossible for many families to create an adequate environment. On the one hand is that pretentiousness which builds for the sake of display—builds not a home, but a "show-place" having all the sublimely enviable characteristics of a museum. On the other hand are those files of standardized, inhabitable houses which have sprung up in answer to the demands created by a universally prevalent policy of industrial centralization. The former condition can be corrected only by a longer tenure of money and some development of taste. The second now engrosses the attention of social observers in all ranks of life. Are we to reckon with this centralization as permanent and bend every effort to adapt ourselves to it as well as possible? Or is it to be opposed radically, so that gradual escape from it will be made possible?

No question is more deserving of attention. Doubtless the report on Probation and Delinquency prepared and issued by the New York Catholic Charities Bureau is destined to have a great effect upon arousing public interest in the housing problem. If the criminal as we face him today is not a certain kind of individual, but simply an individual produced by any one of a number of kinds of deleterious environment, then it becomes necessary to explore these and remove the sources of contamination. As yet, scientists have not looked into all of them thoroughly enough to justify their using definite labels. It may be that the Chicago statistics which tend to prove that most of the city's criminals are reared in congested central districts do not lead immediately to the conclusion that such districts ought not to house human beings. Perhaps one is not justified in saying that cramped souls are the outcome of cramped quarters. But little by little we shall very likely be made to see very clearly the staggering fact that the hovels we relied upon to breed conscientious workers have brought forth a legion of murderous parasites.

At present Americans are aware, at least, how perilously near to chronic social immoralism their wholesale neglect of psychology has brought them. For a generation the watchword has been "opportunity." For the sake of this, it was assumed, all else might be sacrificed and everything dared. The today was always a step to the greater and different tomorrow. There would come (as the advertisements have it) money, prestige, intellectual enlightenment. It was all quite as if a gardener had left his flowers in a dingy cellar with the hopeful assurance that they would be placed within reach of the sun next season. The normal human being can no more help being prepared for "tomorrow" by his present habits and environment than a rosebush can avoid the influence of frost. Nor is there any habit, any environment, which from the beginning has played such a part in annealing him to the purposes given him to accomplish than the mortar which cements the stones of the dwelling into which he is born, through which he lives his days, and in the purposeful form of which he sees, to some extent, the shadow of his own soul.

Years ago, the virulence of tuberculosis forced an anxious society to see to the matter of drainage and sanitation. The necessity for stemming a plague created a great remedial effort. Today, the prevalence of moral and physical decadence, traceable to a large extent to ineffectual homes, will gradually compel America to reckon with that neglect of housing and hearth which has been the country's greatest sin against the poor.

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MICHAEL WILLIAMS, Editor

Assistant Editors

THOMAS WALSH HELEN WALKER
HENRY LONGAN STUART GEORGE N. SHUSTER

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WEEK BY WEEK

THE refusal of President Borno of Haiti to accept Senator King as a guest of the realm offers a most curious comment upon the international situation. Upon several occasions, the Senator has seen fit to upbraid United States policy in Haiti. He maintained that the rule now established, wholly dependent as it is upon the will of the military commander, has nothing in common with "liberty." Furthermore, he pointed out that President Borno, lifted into office by United States mandate, was not constitutionally eligible for the position. He was, in short, acting as a critic of the State Department, over which the Senate is expected to exercise some mild surveillance. It is therefore impossible to avoid diagnosing the present queer decision of the Haitian President as anything save a resolve not to imperil his present comfortable status quo by putting up with mere official curiosity. He puts vastly more faith in the military than in the legislative personnel of the great "sister people" to whom he owes so much. Or is he, perhaps, acting upon a suggestion from higher authority? Does the State Department, tired of senatorial prying into a very tangled and difficult Nicaraguan situation, wish to keep the public eye off Haiti for the present? If so, there is really no way of telling whether Senator Borah may not be viewed with grave suspicion by President Diaz.

SUCH a situation is interesting because it attracts attention to the complexity of American relations in the Caribbean and districts further south. An illuminating debate upon this problem, staged under the auspices of the Foreign Policy Association at Albany, New York, reflected very well two currents of opinion on the subject. Mr. Walter Scott Penfield made the point that protectorates, acquisitions, and spheres of influence as they now figure in United States policy grew out of the duty to protect property in areas made chaotic by revolution and bad government. To some extent there exists also a legitimate "interest" in the Panama Canal, the safety of which must be maintained. He likewise drew attention to visible practical results—prosperity, order, good roads, sanitation. But in conclusion he made the very commendable statement that one should speak of foreign "situations" rather than of a foreign "policy." His opponent, Professor Parker Thomas Moon, maintained that toward the end of the nineteenth century, interpretations of the Monroe Doctrine began to "change," there being a distinct drift toward what is call imperialism. This drift Professor Moon criticized as being contrary to the basic intent of the Monroe Doctrine, as involving "acts of military aggression," and as liable to serve the wishes of "private business interests."

IT WOULD be difficult to state both sides of a vital matter more fairly and succinctly than these two speakers did. Public opinion may well weigh the two statements carefully; but it cannot easily help recognizing the value of Professor Moon's concluding recommendation: "If, when armed intervention seemed necessary to check disorders, we could call upon some international body, such as the Pan-American Union, to pass on the facts and acknowledge the necessity for intervention, the United States would be less open to the charge of aggression." We do need to think of American problems internationally, as Europe is thinking of continental problems internationally. The Pan-American Union is not strong enough to master the situation, but it may conceivably serve as the nucleus for a new and adequate organization which can be called into being if there is sufficient good will. Until such a thing is accomplished, the State Department may act with a comparatively easy conscience, but it will perennially have to face the protests of opinion at home and abroad.

MORE than once in the recent past we have had occasion to congratulate the New York Times on the excellent correspondence it was receiving from Shanghai on the part of Mr. Thomas F. Millard, a resident for many years of the treaty port, and quite evidently conversant with the situation which has culminated in a demand that extra-territoriality should cease. Mr. Millard's comments on the changing situation were not couched in language that aimed to please the British authorities, either on the spot or at Downing Street, and it is with more regret than surprise that we see him replaced by Mr. Frederick Moore, a lively writer with whose views and their expression the same fault is not to be found. On the face of the matter, cheap

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sneers at the Chinese demand for nationality, such cheering news for peace as the hint that a brigade of European troops with a free hand could bring the Celestial Empire to reason in short order, and considerable sophomoric humor whenever the more grotesque aspects of the Celestials intrude themselves, seem a poor exchange for Mr. Millard's thoughtful articles. On a clear issue of fact, Mr. Moore has already been taken to task by a Chinese graduate of the Yale department of education in what is, by contrast, a singularly temperate and convincing letter. For his statement, contained in a despatch printed on March 8, that "the suffering of the Chinese people" debarred (by the strike) from their natural function of working for the foreign concessionaires, "is everywhere heartening to behold," we would like to think an error in proof-reading was responsible.

THE same issue of the Times that gives us Mr. Moore's charitable implication, contains a despatch from M. Jules Sauerwein, of the Paris Matin. This describes an interview with M. Radek, professor at a university in Moscow, which is embarrassing Great Britain's efforts toward pacification on British terms by educating 600 Chinese workers, men and women, in western methods. M. Sauerwein's description of the terrible Soviet leader as a bluff and good-natured person—"a cross between a notary taken from Balzac, and an old-fashioned sea-captain"—is good journalese, and can be let go at that. Rather more to the point is a little anecdote that is not without its suggestions: "M. Radek showed me a shelf on which are very old volumes in superb morocco bindings. 'Works on China of your eighteenth-century Jesuits,' he says. 'They are a hundred times superior to anything written by modern savants, and show a comprehension of the Chinese spirit which has never been equaled since.'" One likes to think that the generally fine attitude of the missionary body of all persuasions in the Chinese crisis, may owe a little to this old-time Jesuit "comprehension of the Chinese spirit" which the Soviet leader, to his credit be it said, was honest enough to praise.

WHILE one may not agree with every deduction drawn by Isaac F. Marcosson in his series of articles on conditions in Mexico, now appearing in the Saturday Evening Post, it is a source of satisfaction that the conditions themselves should be disclosed competently and fully in a publication of such wide circulation. The more completely the facts are known regarding the situation in Mexico, the less need there will be for argument, or even discussion. These facts show clearly that, as Mr. Marcosson points out, the spiritual, as well as the business life of the neighboring republic is being impeded. They demonstrate that the key to the state of constant turmoil is found in the closely coördinated class-government, in which a particular group, having gained power by force, retains it by the same means, with contempt for all forms of law and with disregard of all obligations to the nation as a whole. The picture of Calles himself, drawn after an intimate study of the subject for several days, is illuminating. Harsh, domineering, the demagogue who professes the most profound love for the peon, yet himself maintains an immense estate, he appears sinister and impressively typical. He talks glibly about fair play, and declares the authorities at Washington do not understand him. Perhaps they do not. If they did, they would address him in a manner which would make him understand that he has definite obligations to others.

THE *Liquor Control Act for Ontario* appears to have been well named. Perusal of the provisions of the measure introduced into the legislature by Premier Ferguson, shows that this will be an act with teeth in it. The commission created to administer it is given wide powers; it may cancel permits without giving any reason, and it is expressly stated that none of the board's rulings are subject to revision by any court in the land. Druggists are not permitted to sell liquor, which will only be obtainable at government stores; and distilleries and breweries, which will operate under the supervision of government inspectors, may sell only to the government itself. Drinking in public is prohibited, all liquor having to be consumed in residences—which term is held to include rooms in hotels and clubs. The act is so worded that by the powers given to the commission, that body may, at its discretion, give to hotels the privilege of selling wine and beer with meals, but does not, by its own wording, confer such privilege. One of the remarkable features of the bill is the severity of the penalties which it imposes for any infraction of the proposed law. Individuals convicted of selling liquor must go to jail for two months without the option of a fine; and persons found with liquor in their possession must prove that they obtained it from a government store or go to prison; and the judges and magistrates who shall try such cases are authorized to cancel permits. It looks as though bootlegging in Ontario will be neither as lucrative nor as safe as it is under prohibition in the United States.

BUT then, Ontario is not going into the bootlegging business on its own account. The attempt along these lines in this country was as ignominious as it was expensive. It was eminently fitting that United States District-Attorney Buckner, in New York, should have admitted, in filing a nolle prosequi dismissing an indictment obtained a year ago against a large denaturing plant, that the government would be unable to produce evidence which might reasonably be relied upon to result in conviction. The plain fact of the matter is that the disclosure of the "under-cover" methods of government agents in operating illegal liquor concerns for the purpose of trapping the bigger bootleggers, has made it almost impossible for any district-attorney in New York, where the government conducted its illegal business, to obtain a conviction from any liquor-trial jury.

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THE action of the 116 members of the Princeton faculty in endorsing the desire expressed last December by the faculty of political science of Columbia University for a reconsideration of the settlement of the Allied debts, will let loose another flood of letters to the newspapers. But whether one agrees or disagrees with the statement of President Hibben issued as explanatory of Princeton's stand, it is at least frank and clear. The head of the university takes the ground that in economics, as well as in morals, altruism is indistinguishable from true self-interest. This puts any discussion which may follow on a new plane. There are those who will challenge another statement that to urge our government's obligations to its citizen bondholders and taxpayers is to evade the real issue "which does not concern the relation of the government to the people, but our national policy toward certain other states"; but thoughtful consideration of the relation of altruism to economics should at least widen the whole outlook in regard to the question of the debts. For this reason, if for no other, it is well that the members of the Princeton faculty should have made public their views on the question.

IT IS encouraging to note that the fear of Al Smith, which has recently driven the "comedian of the Senate" into a variety of antics, seems to be dying out even in quarters where one might have expected it to linger on. Cultivated Protestants have, of course, long since agreed that opposition to a presidential candidate merely because of his religion would be morally indefensible. That everybody—Catholic and Protestant—ought to view men in public life frankly, and disagree with them if necessary, is, of course, conceded; and the Governor of New York will not be favored by fellow-Catholics who cannot accept his political standards. Recently the London New Statesman commented upon the situation in terms which deserve to be noted in this country. After declaring that Governor Smith is "today the most interesting personality in the public life of the United States," the editor went on to say:

"WHAT are the chances for this man to secure the Democratic nomination? If he were a Protestant, it would be handed to him on a silver platter; but it will require some courage for the party managers to risk the antagonism of such formidable organizations as the Anti-Saloon League. On the other hand, with the convincing evidence of the growth of anti-prohibitionist sentiment provided by the referenda of last November, and with the Republican party irretrievably committed to dryness, elementary considerations of political strategy would seem to dictate the choice of a wet candidate by the Democrats. Governor Smith, apart from offering the certain promise of carrying a great pivotal state, has a nation-wide fame and fund of popularity with the working-classes of the North. As a Catholic and a wet, he would strike a completely new note; and in the general breakdown of normal party lines which would ensue, ordinary political calculations would cease to operate. The campaign might be colored with tremendous bitterness. But it is also easily within the range of possibility that the attractive qualities, political skill, and fine public record of Al Smith might upset all political reckonings, confound all religious bigots and temperance fanatics, and bring him and his party to power."

IT IS no disrespect to the vast majority of our priesthood, who take the beaten track to the altar by way of school, college and seminary, to admit that there is, to the lay mind at least, something especially appealing in the history of eleventh-hour vocations. This is particularly true when the grizzled neophyte is an old soldier or sailor. Yet this is probably the case in which transition is felt as least abrupt. Discipline, respect for delegated authority, have become second nature. In neither one life nor the other is personal gain the object, and the man who has "endured hardness like a good soldier" is not likely to repine at it as a good priest. A particularly interesting case of the kind is recalled by the death of Padre Fosco of the Dominican order, once (in the world and the Italian army list) General Alfonso Fosco, commander of the military division of Padua.

THE call to the sacred ministry did not reach General Fosco until late in life and when retired from the army by the regulation age-limit. Keeping his rank and station a secret, the Osservatore Romano tells us, the aging soldier came to Rome, lodged with the Benedictines of Saint Ambrogio, and attended courses of philosophy and theology. "It was a moving sight," we are told, and can well believe, "to see this man, already old, seated among the youthful aspirants for the sanctuary." Only at the end of his studies did Don Fosco reveal the fact that he had been a soldier, and a brilliant one, with a long record of active service in Africa. "I resisted the divine call as long as I could, esteeming myself unworthy," he admitted, "but after a Communion I made, Our Lord overcame my hesitancies." The life in religion of this soldier-priest, though necessarily brief, was intense and largely spent in the confessional. A work very near to his heart was the abolition of dueling in the army, an incident of his youth, when he took part in an "affair of honor," as second, having remained the bitterest of all his old memories.

A VERY curious and interesting discovery has just been made in the choir of Saint Magnus's Cathedral, in the Orkney Islands. Dingwall, though a royal borough and a place of great antiquity, has a population of not more than two thousand, and owes its name to the Norse "thingvöllr," or "field of the meeting." Saint Rognwald, a famous Norseman, founded this cathedral, but Saint Magnus (also Norse) to whom it is dedicated, was its more prominent patron. Both the Icelandic and the Orkneyinga sagas agree that

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Saint Magnus was murdered—executed by beheading, it was called at that time—and that his remains, as those of a martyr, were taken from his grave and enshrined over the altar of Christ Kirk, Birsay, twenty years after his death. Thence they were taken to another church, and finally to the little cathedral. High up in the choir, with pillars on each side, two skeletons have recently been found, walled up in niches. They have been very carefully examined by Professor Reid, a distinguished anthropologist, who seems to have made out as clear a case as possible for their complete identification as the skeletons of the two saints named above. Their skulls, though actually of the long, narrow type, as might be expected of Scandinavians, are yet not far from being brachycephalic, or broad-headed. The skulls of the majority of mediaeval ecclesiastics seem to belong to the broad, or round, group.

CONFUCIUS AND THE CROSS

THE peril at Shanghai has naturally called a great deal of attention to what has been accomplished by the missionaries of Europe in the vast Chinese land. An article in the Fortnightly Review, signally the intelligent attitude toward native sentiment assumed by the Catholic Church, has been productive of much comment in the United States. The New York Times, for instance, noted the article and pointed to the importance of its major conclusions. Various correspondents then hurried to the fore, magnifying the actions of a few imprudent missionaries into what they termed a general Catholic "demand" in China. However trivial the statements used to uphold this controversy may seem, they call attention to the central policy of the Vatican, expressed so clearly by Pope Pius XI when he consecrated six new Chinese bishops: "I have consecrated the first Chinese bishops; my successors will have the joy of consecrating the first African bishops."

What this means in the world of religion and social principle has been set forth so well by Monsignor De Guébriant, superior of the French foreign missions, that it is worth while quoting his words:

"The conversion of China to Christianity would mean the complete ruin of paganism. Up until now the principal obstacle encountered by the missionaries has been the occidental, foreign—and therefore suspect to the Chinese—character of the Christian religion. Everything that could be done to remove this hindrance has now been accomplished. Among the sixty vicariats or dioceses which now divide up among them the territory of this immense republic, there are already six where a Catholic Chinese population is ministered to by a Catholic Chinese clergy under the jurisdiction of a Chinese bishop. This population may say to those who are led to reproach adherence to a foreign institution: 'No, we do not practise an alien religion: we are sons of the Catholic Church, Chinese in China quite so much as it is French in France or American in America. Among the many institutions which our country has freely borrowed from afar, we are the most ancient, and the most firmly rooted in the national soil. See our Chinese dioceses!'

"Who does not see the assistance that is given to Christianity in China by these recent initiatives of the Church? The greatness and importance of the part which the new bishops are to play is evident. It is they who shall prove to their fellow-citizens, governing or governed, that while they are as whole-heartedly Chinese as anyone, they are also Catholic bishops, in possession of the whole truth which they are to preserve intact, safeguarded against doctrinal error as they are by their indefectible union with the Holy See. It is their task to encourage the Chinese to love a religion which is so generously and totally aloof from everything that might constitute a reason for opposing it. And when the present crisis will have passed, and the Chinese stand delivered of the burdens which harass them, seeing that liberty is not the same thing as isolation, these bishops will be there to show how it is possible for a nation to coöperate with others while not surrendering anything of its independence or its originality."

The promise for the future here held out is one in which the universal Church can rejoice. And yet, as Monsieur De Guébriant reminds us, the older missionary remains—the martyr of the past, the pioneer of the present, upon whose scroll the most radiant of all heroisms is inscribed. It is he who, having surrendered all the attractiveness of his native country, devotes all life to the building of a mystical spiritual kingdom which in the end passes over to the religious children he has reared. After all, the whole of Christendom is that which springs up in the furrow traced by the missionary apostle.

CLEAN BOOKS

ONE of the sacrifices which the world is fated to pay as intercourse is speeded up and contacts become closer, would seem to be a certain peremptory tone in legislation, not always as distinguishable as could be wished from the ukases formerly associated with personal rule, and again becoming familiar as country after country discards the democratic and persuasive formula. One reason, of course, is a change in the tempo of life. Evil as well as beneficial enterprises attain their growth more quickly today, thrust their roots into less resistant soil, turn, in fewer years, into vested interests with a capitalization of millions, and a place, however impudently usurped, in general prosperity. The state, if it would exercise its protective or remedial function with any chance of success, has little time for argument. It is almost forced to adopt a trenchant and formidable attitude, and to nerve the arm of the police with responsibilities that its founders hardly contemplated.

In such a process, the susceptibilities of a good many

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people are sure to get hurt. Elementary rules of conduct are never erected into legislation without a certain chastening feeling of humiliation taking hold of those who have observed them, from instinct, all their lives. That the feeling is entirely illogical does not matter; neither does a fact generally conceded, on demand, namely, that the reason the state does not make such distinctions is because it cannot. A host of things that have no place in reason combine to create a temper. And the personal temper that they create, multiplied over and over again, is responsible for the corporate reaction when the state speaks to proscribe.

The Clean Books bill, whose fate, at the time of writing, is in suspense at Albany, has been somewhat overshadowed by the debate on theatrical censorship, and the contrasting opinions of very well-intentioned people which this has called forth. Nevertheless, its importance will appear in due course, and meantime, the letter from a correspondent that we print upon it in another section of this issue, is proof that in the one case no less than in the other, divergent views can exist. This divergence, we humbly submit, is due more to this resentment at the encroachments of the state than to any real conflict in the facts as observed.

No one who has eyes to see can honestly deny that the distribution of a printed and pictured word, so addressed to the baser curiosities and obsessions that the word pornography is not too strong to describe it, has attained the proportions of a plague. The evil takes many forms. In the crudest it is manifested in the ill-written dailies, still damp from the press, which exploit one unsavory case after another in strident headlines and smudged half-tones, and whose dirt, literally, comes off on fingers that turn their pages. Closely allied is a proliferation of monthly magazines, professing to "report life," but reporting only its least worthy aspects, and which keep within what has till now been the law by an adroit "moral," bearing about the same proportion to their inherent appeal as the joker in a dishonest contract bears to its binding clauses.

At a considerable distance, but not so great a distance as opponents of the bill at Albany may claim, comes the whole province of the bound volume, issued in nine cases out of ten with the imprint of a reputable publishing house on its title-page, confidently offered as a contribution to the humanities, and appealing for favorable notice to newspapers and magazines whose attitude to decency and good citizenship is best vouched for by the honored names they bear. As this is the ground where the battle will be hardest fought, and where (in view of the fact that all but an inconsiderable proportion of new books see the light in New York) ill-considered action will work most harm, no care in estimating their worthiness, worthlessness, or harmfulness, can be too meticulous.

The variety of the books at which the Clean Books bill may be considered as conceivably aimed is so great, that to do it justice, even from the single point of view of ethics, would require a volume in itself. In history, they range from valuable documents, whose only offense (if offense it be) is a frank exposition of the part played in national development by the dubious elements in human nature, to reprints or rehashes where the design to rake over the muck-heap of the past is so evident that it does not escape the most cursory examination. Scientifically, they shade off from the sanitative perceptions of luminous and adult minds, into the sort of pseudo-medical handbook by which disbarred Dr. Ossip, in Conrad's Secret Service, earned his disreputable livelihood. In fiction, the mind that would follow their implications reels at the self-imposed task. Yet it is neither exaggeration nor prudery, but a bald statement of fact, to say that an increasing proportion of them are written by men (and women) to whom the limitations loyally accepted by those who created for us the great tradition of the English and American novel are irksome and hateful, and who are doing their best to realize the day foreseen by Wilde on the eve of his own moral collapse when what was once called sin would be "the only element of color left in the world."

No law of censorship has ever been or ever will be drawn whose rectilinear working through so heterogeneous a mass of human effort will not work occasional injustice. But it is hard to see what a state can do, faced with the condition that has been growing upon us for years, save to take cognizance of it. There is both truth and reasonableness in Monsignor Lavelle's contention, advanced during the hearing upon stage censorship at the state capital, that any sort of control by government, however used we have grown to it, is really censorship under a less contentious and more familiar name. Punitive legislation, as contrasted with the "moral suasion" our correspondent asks for, is always an ungrateful alternative. Utopias omit it from their scheme or they would not be utopias. Analogies drawn from the Volstead Act, with its admittedly deplorable results, will hardly do. Alcoholic content is a matter of fact—erotic or blasphemic content a matter of opinion. In the one case, a hard-and-fast law can be laid down and put into the least enlightened hands to enforce. In the other, it is hard to see how any given case will be able to be decided save on its individual merits. The mere airing of the law at each successive attempt to enforce it should serve to keep it sane and beneficial.

Above all, the plea so profusely advanced that art will necessarily suffer from control in the name of decency should not be let pass by default. If the English or American novel has advanced in dignity or importance since the bars were let down, the advance has escaped the notice of any critic worth listening to. Perhaps the best argument against the pornographic book and in favor of a return to older understandings of what is permissible is not to be found in the moral province at all. It may well reside in the very poor service that is being rendered to art by those who call loudest for liberty in her name.

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AN OUTLINE OF NICARAGUA

By WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS

BOTH in Panama and in Nicaragua, Indian tribes hostile to the Spaniards gave frequent shelter to Spain's enemies, and those enemies were most generally represented in the Spanish Main by English buccaneers. Very often the Panama Indians would receive a party of pirates and guide them across the isthmus where, on the Pacific side, they would pick out some fishing boat, with it capture some larger vessel in the Gulf of Panama, and eventually possess themselves of something big enough to prey on the Peruvian great ships and bring their looted cargoes around the Horn.

Before Jamaica was occupied by the British in 1655, English buccaneers used the Nicaraguan coast for outfitting and careening, or hiding from stronger Spanish fleets. After the establishment of a British colonial government at Port Royal, it became somewhat awkward to give shelter to the buccaneers, and the Carib chief of what had come to be called the Mosquito coast was given a charter from Jamaica, under the title of king, making him governor and protector of all Englishmen within his dominions, in return for protection by England. In 1740, this protectorate by England was carried a step further and an English colony was set up, protected by troops; under both the Treaty of Paris (1763) and the Treaty of Versailles (1783) England agreed to withdraw from the "Spanish continent," but by maintaining that the Mosquito coast was part of the "American continent," occupation was kept alive until 1786, when both the English colony and England's claim to a protectorate of the Mosquito coast fell into abeyance until the time of the wars of independence.

In 1821, a British protectorate was again set up in the Mosquito country, and pressed against the Nicaraguans more vigorously than had perhaps seemed wise against Spain. In 1848, Greytown was included in the British claim, though in the name of the "king" of the Mosquitoes, and an attempt was made at the same time to seize some spot on the western coast to give a terminal to the interoceanic canal which had long been contemplated. This move brought help to the Nicaraguan side of the controversy from the United States, and the much quoted Clayton-Bulwer Treaty resulted, by which each party to it agreed not to claim exclusive control over any canal that might be built through Nicaragua, nor to exercise dominion over any part of Central America. England continued to occupy Greytown, however, which caused further dispute until, in 1860, the British portion of the Mosquito coast was ceded to Honduras (Treaty of Comayagua) and the sovereignty or protectorate over the Nicaraguan portion was ceded to Nicaragua by the Treaty of Managua. Finally, in 1896, the Mosquito Indians voluntarily agreed to complete incorporation in the Nicaraguan republic.

During the latter part of this time, since the annexation of California, and very particularly since the discovery of gold and the gold rush of 1849, Nicaragua had become a highway to California from our eastern states, as had Panama. Of the two isthmian ways, Nicaragua was the easier, and both were easier to a good many people than an attempt to cross the prairies and the Rocky Mountains, in spite of the greater distance by the southern route. In 1855, Nicaragua had become well known to Americans, perhaps better known to a larger percentage of Americans than was the case in our own day, before the landing of marines. In 1854, Nicaragua was in civil war. That is, the two principal cities, Granada, the centre of the conservative or aristocratic party, and Leon, the centre of the liberals or "reds," were passing through one of their periodical jealous contests for supremacy. The conservative party had elected Fruto Chamorro to be President. The democratic party, so-called, or liberals, had elected Francisco Castellon; the struggle had reached a stalemate.

At about the same time, two diplomatic representatives to Central America (a federal republic of Central America had existed from 1823 to 1839) the Spanish and the American ministers presented their credentials to the conservative government, though, it is said, both favored the liberals. This "recognition" encouraged the weaker "legitimists." There was talk of annexation by Mexico, in the air. Carrero, the Indian President of Guatemala, was reaching into the affairs of the neighboring states. The position of the liberals had to be strengthened; Castellon hit upon a device, and made an innocent-looking contract for "settlers" or "colonists" to take up land within liberal territory—in reality, of course, to form a foreign legion. His call reached the ready and sympathetic ears of William Walker, of Nashville, Tennessee. Colonel, or (as he signs himself in his The War in Nicaragua; Mobile: 1860) General Walker had just come through an experience of empire building in Mexico. He had been defeated, disarmed by the California authorities, and tried by jury—but acquitted. The request of Castellon for 300 Americans appealed to him. No doubt, Walker enjoyed fighting for its own sake. No doubt, either, that he had a vision of what Central America might become under the vigorous guidance of such a man as himself. There came into the whole situation also, not only an interoceanic canal, but a colonization plan for free Negroes from the United States —"a better solution for them than Liberia." Walker's military success terrified Nicaragua's neighbors and brought them in on the conservative side. Finally,

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Walker and his companions were arrested by Commodore Paulding and deported. Concerning this arrest President Buchanan, in his message of January 7, 1858, rebuked Paulding and vindicated Walker's motives. Attempting to return, Walker was captured and shot in 1860.

It is not necessary to dwell long on this incident—it serves my present purpose to show that Nicaragua was better known to the generation of our fathers' youth than it is to our own. The idea of a canal utilizing the great lake has always attracted Americans—as has the advantage of the climate over that of fever-ridden Panama. Various projects have been advanced—even for a ship railway to carry ships bodily across from sea to sea; many surveys have been made. Intercourse between Americans and Nicaragua has been of the closest for a hundred years. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850 was, in effect, a compromise; both England and the United States aimed at monopoly; each country disclaimed monopolistic desire in order to thwart the other.

There had grown up in the United States a real divergence of opinion whether the canal should be purely American and monopolized, or American but free to all, or international; whether it should be guaranteed neutral by all nations in time of war, as a great international public utility, or fortified. Of course, there also came into question profits to be derived from it directly in tolls as well as indirectly from improved world transportation. The Hay-Pauncefote agreement of 1900 attempted to provide for neutrality. The year 1901 produced a treaty providing for American control of a canal, to be policed by the United States, but open to both merchant vessels and warships of all nations, in war or in peace, at equal toll rates. Nicaragua was still in the minds of most Americans, but (perhaps because having checked England we could always come back to Nicaragua if necessary, and the Panama route having fallen into the hands of the French he felt it necessary to do something about that) Roosevelt decided for Panama, diverting attention from Nicaragua for a time.

Outside of the perennial struggle between the two chief cities of the republic, Nicaragua had been fairly quiet for twenty years. Her working population of Indians, mestizos (white and Indian) and samboes (Negro and Indian) was beginning to taste prosperity from the extension of tropical industries, like fruit growing, mahogany production, etc. Costa Rica had certainly gained in material comfort through the great fruit industry; "perhaps a close alliance with American capital was wise policy." With the advent to power of José Santos Zelaya, however, came resurrection of old political ambitions—the resurgence of the United States of Central America idea. The consequent agitation in all five republics called down the disapproval of the United States. It is unquestionably desirable that these Indian populations should be permitted to develop in peace. One does not hesitate to endorse that abstract principle. Zelaya was a disturber of the peace and hostile to the hegemony of the United States. In 1909, a revolution broke out against him, headed by Adolfo Diaz. Revolutions in Central America can be private affairs. Their study would be a subject of itself. It is freely asserted that this was one of the many backed by American private capital, and one in which our State Department was "not interested" since it was "pro-American." Some Americans, however, attempting to blow up a troop ship of Zelaya, were executed, with the inevitable result that Zelaya was forced out of the country by our government.

In 1910 came the reëstablishment of "constitutional" government under American auspices, including settlement of claims for damage of American citizens, a loan from American bankers guaranteed by customs receipts, supervision of the customs by Americans, and general straightening out of government finances. Some familiarity with subsequent events must be assumed in so brief a synopsis as this must necessarily be. In 1911, a treaty was negotiated on the basis of the Dawson agreement of 1910, just referred to, and in spite of being rejected three times by our Senate, its provisions were nevertheless carried out by Adolfo Diaz, as President, in coöperation with American private interests. He had even proposed agreement by his government to American protective intervention. Mr. Diaz has always been particularly friendly to the United States and his business relationships have been American, a fact which is not infrequently held against him, not only in Nicaragua, but in the United States. He was employed by an American business; that is not necessarily a crime. "He has been opposed by Nicaraguan public opinion"—Nicaraguan public opinion is not easy to study. The composition of the Nicaraguan public must be taken into consideration, as well as the fundamental rivalry between the two social elements, conservatives and liberals, Granada and Leon. "He has been held in power by American marines"; that is perfectly true; there has been a marine guard in Nicaragua for years. There were American vigilantes and vigilance committees on the Central American routes to California in 1849 to protect Americans in transit; there were American marines there later as a symbol rather than an armed force, to protect growing American business interests from periodical devastation; to protect the administration of government finances to the point whereat a new generation might become accustomed to honest accounting of government revenues; it may be asserted also: to protect the growth in Nicaragua of a taste for peace and order and self-government.

To the interests of groups of American citizens was added, by the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty of 1915, an interest which might truly be called a national interest, the exclusive right to build the long contemplated Nicaraguan interoceanic canal; a national interest since it must be acquired and probably be constructed out of

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the general funds of our government, i. e., the American taxpayers' funds. The whole question today seems to center about the "right" of the State Department to perform the acts in Nicaragua which it has performed over many years. It is not necessary to assume that those acts were necessarily harmful to Nicaragua, oppressive, or even a full technical invasion of Nicaragua's sovereign rights or in any way unethical. What is being questioned at the present time is the right of the first step—the extension of governmental acts beyond its own boundaries for whatever purpose.

Our failure to accept a decision by the Central American court of justice, which we helped to establish for just such questions, certainly demands fullest explanation. Our methods might be reviewed to advantage. It is very much up to the Department of State to restate first principles in this problem. The public is entitled to it. There should be no mystery in American diplomacy; its objectives should be clearly defined. To some degree, the conduct of foreign relations must be responsible to someone, and ultimately to the American public, in the interest of peace.

MYSTICISM: A POPULAR EXPOSITION

By JOHN K. SHARP

NOT so long ago, "mysticism" was a term of vague reproach or ridicule. Today the word flows from the facile pen of the pamphleteer and has won its way into the vocabulary of the reporter. The non-Catholic world discusses the subject freely and, if not always accurately, certainly with gravity and sincerity. And if the intelligentsia outside the Church may speak and write about mysticism, should not the cultured Catholic be at least interested? Not that mysticism is a panacea for this world's ills or that it may have more than an inspirational bearing on our lives to know how the saints communicated on earth with God. But it is a subject which has been much in honor in the Church of God through the ages; it has led men and women to closest possible union with Him—which is the aim of our common religion—and it has provided for religion an experimental evidence whose testimony cannot be doubted.

The writer's acquaintance with the subject is indeed theoretic rather than practical, and due rather to readings prompted by a perhaps unusual curiosity, than to such experimental knowledge as is enjoyed by those who in this life have "seen" God. And he can, therefore, in this brief essay, only indicate some essential characteristics of a subject which, though it should claim our interest, is difficult of exposition.

The term mysticism comes from the Greek words, μ ν ω, to keep silence, and μ ν σ τ α ι, the initiate in the sacred rites of Greek religion. With these origins the word came first to mean the "disciplina arcani" and the secret prayers in the Christian liturgy, and finally to designate those mysterious direct intimacies of the soul in prayerful union with God.

The proper definition of mysticism is perhaps best arrived at by first saying what it is not. In the popular mind, mysticism is still, as William James said, "anything vast, vague, or sentimental." So the poet and the litterateur; the artist and the idealist; the psychologist and the dreamer of dreams; and the ordinary mortal who loses himself in a love of nature, who "finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything"; and again, all whose activity is deprived of clarity or intellectual or moral equilibrium and who revel in the abnormal, the obscure, and the inconceivable—all these have been dubbed mystics, not only by the unlearned, but by the learned in less critical moments.

What, then, is mysticism? Mysticism is a communication between God and the soul, made independently of the bodily senses, but as direct and certain in action as the bodily senses. It is an experimental spiritual "sensation" of the divine, an immediate and unreasoned intuition or conscious perception of the presence of God or of a supernatural object in the soul. We are to understand that these phrases refer to real experience. The mystic cannot prove them, any more than you or I can prove the objectivity of this paper, save by appeal to the testimony of our consciousness. But the knowledge they imply is actual and experimental, that is, it comes from an object that makes itself recognized by the subject as present. It is not a question of thinking of and concluding God's presence as in ordinary prayer, but of feeling and perceiving His presence. God not merely helps the mystic think of Him, but He makes His presence felt by an experimental, intellectual knowledge.

Now there is no question of corporeal vision of God Who "is a true spirit and cannot be seen with bodily eyes," nor is it question of intellectually seeing God, as we say we see (i. e., understand) an abstract proposition. God, indeed, is really seen with such an intellectual vision in the Beatific Vision, but is not, most theologians teach, in mystic prayer, which is but a preparation for that vision. Yet that He is "seen" in some metaphorical way in the apex or higher and spiritual parts of the soul, we have the word of the mystics. More concrete and detailed explanation cannot be offered, unfortunately; we can only refer the reader to those ample, if analogous and at times obscure, descriptions of such states left us by mystical writers themselves.

So, also, when the mystics tell us God's presence is "felt" by an interior "touch," they are drawing upon analogies to liken what is a real but spiritual sensation

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to a bodily sensation. So, too, for those other spiritual experiences which they can describe only in the material terms of hearing, tasting, smelling, etc. For example, in the prayer of quiet, they "repose in God"—"they are plunged in Him"—and they liken this experience of nearness to the physical sensation of feeling the presence of one's body when one is motionless, with shut eyes. Again, the interior "touch" is likened to the sensation a sentient sponge might feel if it were penetrated with water.

Let us briefly construct the prayerful odyssey of a mystic's soul. The neophyte in the science of prayer, the soul in ordinary grace union with God, reflects and meditates much before it hazards an affection. Thus, strong convictions about the truths of faith are engendered and made automatic in the subconscious, and a solid sub-structure is laid for the mystical contemplation to come. With the growth of proficiency in meditation, the reflections form a diminishing part, the affections an increasing part, of the prayer. This prayer of affection finds little satisfaction in discursive meditation, is handicapped by frequent distractions, and is further characterized by a growing longing for God.

But God has prepared an advanced state more satisfying to the longings of the soul. It is called the prayer of simple regard or of simplicity. In it the tersely worded affections show little variety in phraseology or choice of object. The prevailing sentiment recurs constantly despite distractions, as jetsam sucked to the bottom of a whirlpool reappears constantly as flotsam; or to vary the figure, as a mother watches, with interruptions indeed, but without reasoning, over her child's cradle. The prayer assumes the unvarying form of a single glance, a loving attention to God present; for intellectual professions of faith in God's presence have yielded to a simple look of the soul toward Christ—a look devoid of any particularizing image. This is an attitude that welcomes any thought which He may awaken.

Presuming that further grace and correspondence to it next follow, the prayer of simplicity blossoms by a natural and easy transition into the next, a truly mystical stage, the prayer of quiet, so called from its effects on the soul. Distractions are still of frequent occurrence in this state of further union with God and of more intense looking and waiting upon Him; but though resisting them, the soul, for the rest, becomes more passive, leaving it to the Beloved to provide its spiritual good.

The passivity referred to here characterizes not only the prayer of quiet, but all truly mystical prayer. In passive prayer the soul yields itself to acts for which it has facility, and does not force itself. The will and memory, imagination and intelligence, are at work only subconsciously; yet they work all the better for their automatism, just as friends learn about one another best, not by discursion, but by association. The soul has, however, a quite evident activity and this consists in warding off distractions and keeping its "eye" riveted upon God. Doubtless, the mystic was led to this state of prayer by making aspirations and thinking of the presence of God. But the former activity would not now be a help, but a hindrance, and must be laboriously eschewed. To repeat: The soul's activity consists in warding off distractions and concentrating on the presence of God; its passivity, in leaving itself open to God's actions in the centre of its being.

Passivity of prayer has been confused at times with Quietism, in which the soul thinks of nothing and does nothing save to suppress all activity. However, the likeness between the mortified mystic's passivity and the unregulated desires of the followers of Molinos, who were taught to resist nothing, not even distractions or temptations, is barely surface deep.

All truly mystic prayer has still another attribute, that of obscurity, called also the dark night. The first dark night or night of sense follows after the prayer of simplicity. In it the soul's contemplation is obscure; it looks for God and sees a blank; it is anxious lest it fail to serve God and it longs to fly to God; but the door of its cage is shut and only He can open it. Relief comes, however, by the cessation of this form of prayer, when the soul falls back to the prayer of simple regard; or by an increase of intensity, when the darkness, becoming more bearable, is shot with occasional flashes of illumination that reveal God's inward presence in the deepest part of the soul.

We may now, after rather sketchily characterizing these essential elements of all mystic prayer, whether in its first or fuller stages, follow our mystic as he leaves the prayer of quiet and advances to the prayer of union. His prayer now is free from distractions for his soul is fully occupied with and plunged into God, and has greater certainty of His presence. Remarkable to say, this prayer may be enjoyed in the midst of exterior occupations.

Finally, the last stage of all these preceding non-transforming unions is ecstatic. In it outside communication with the senses is suspended, respiration is almost arrested, the limbs generally are immovable and the vital heat apparently gone. However, there is a growth in the power of the higher faculties and frequently the "sight" of God is granted, though not the Beatific Vision, of course.

The summit of mystical contemplation—achieved, we are led to believe, by very few—is called, variously, the transforming or deifying union, or spiritual marriage. It is an almost permanently conscious union with God in the midst of exterior occupations. In it the operation of the higher faculties is quite transformed and the soul is fully conscious of the communication of the divine life and operation in all her own higher operations, as well as in the depths of her being. There is generally an accompanying permanent intellectual vision of the Trinity or of some divine attribute. But here again it is only "ad lucem per crucem," for this last stage of mystical prayer is preceded by what is called the second night of the soul. This is caused

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by the divine light of contemplation shining into a soul that is incapable of perfect enlightenment in this life. Just as the sun blinds the unguarded eye, so does this light surpass the soul's strength and obscure its perception. It is a darkness that hides God as He is in Himself, but the darkness is divine.

It has been asked, Is mystical contemplation for all? Without attempting an answer, I shall try to point out some of the implications involved in the question. An integral part of mysticism is indeed the peace it engenders, a peace which is not of this world; but "this holy exercise of prayer has," as Saint Teresa says, "its price." Before the initial and final phases of peace may be enjoyed, other stages preparatory to them must be gone through—the nights of sense and of spirit. And if any are inclined lightly to attempt mysticism, let such be warned that it is prepared for only by self-renunciation in order to follow Christ, by loving God above all else and man for God's sake, and by answering every call of grace. There are periods of bitter aridity when the soul is in darkness and, illumined only occasionally, waits on God; when the self activities independent of God are being destroyed and the soul is crucified between heaven and earth. Saint Teresa, after she had extinguished all purely natural joys, was willing to suffer more or to die if she could not suffer. This suffering is none other than a picture of the purgation all must endure before they are fit for either the transforming union of this life or the perfect possession and vision of God in the next. And indeed the Little Flower tells us, "mais je sais aussi que le feu de l'amour est plus sanctifiant que celui du purgatoire." The mystics suffer their purgatory here; ordinary mortals hereafter.

Some mystics may not advance beyond the prayer of quiet, some enjoy the mystic marriage. To some are given ecstasies, prophecies, and other gifts. Such external gifts are in nowise essential and may be a source of grave danger. Great caution is needed in their discernment, and it is well to know that theologians and directors of souls have formulated rules for distinguishing their various phases and directions for conduct in them. Finally, it is well to repeat that the mystic states are independent of man's willing and that he can only dispose himself for them.

A word in conclusion on the difficulties raised by the new psychology against the objective value of mysticism. The revelations of mysticism are called by some the delivery of the unconscious and the illusions of autosuggestion. The sense of union with God is termed purely subjective, while ecstasies are said to be due to an unduly repressed sex life.

Now, it is quite true, as has been pointed out, that falsities and exaggerations have marred the practices of some mystics, just as abuses may sometimes mar, even though they do not destroy, any other good thing. All such the Church rejects more strongly than can any self-appointed censor. Catholic tradition, guided by theology and its handmaid philosophy, is well qualified to condemn the false and advocate the true. And these findings of our faith tell us that mysticism is no delusion resulting from an artificially induced physical condition, for sense experiences are not necessarily connected with it. Saint Teresa was quick to discern in her own states the part played by God, the devil, or healthy or morbid nature. And surely something more than imagination is needed to explain how from her distant cell she foresaw and foretold the killing of forty Jesuit missionaries on a ship bound for Brazil. No medical testimony can be cited of the modification of tissues such as the stigmata, nor of localized wounds caused by mere imagination, which bleed on fixed days. There are no records of a natural levitation. Nor can rapture itself be called useless for it serves a purpose if only to evidence in the mystic a certain imperfect participation in that gift of fleetness which is to be the property of all resurrected bodies.

But perhaps the best apologetic is based upon the scriptural principle, "By their fruits you shall know them." Lethargy, catalepsy, hypnotism, trance, hallucination, somnambulism and anaesthesia, to which the mystic states, especially the ecstatic, are sometimes likened, are as a rule convulsive and repulsive, paralyzing the limbs and obsessing the soul with a slight idea, such as the image of a bird or flower which arises generally from the tactile, aural, or visual imagination. From such states the patient emerges dull and depressed, his weakened intellect dominated by his imagination and his moral tone lowered—clearly a degenerated nature. The ecstatic conditions, on the contrary, are calm and dignified. In them the purely intellectual faculty is developed by magnificent sights and profound ideas. Further, the mystics come forth from their communings with God strong characters, capable of originating vast and difficult projects, guided by reason and with a will that fights all opposition in seeking after the highest moral ideals.

On this point alone one might multiply proof that genuine mysticism is not a theory or a delightful religious sensation indulged in by religious free-lances, contemptuous of tradition; it is not an emotional approach to life or a symbolizing of nature or a pantheistic view of the universe. It is an active, purposeful life led by "men and women of whom this world is not worthy," as Saint Paul says; by eminent and practical saints—like Saint Teresa, who founded sixteen convents for women and fourteen for men; like Saint Jane de Chantal, who was responsible for eighty-seven; like Saint Catherine of Siena, who could neither read nor write, yet was a "great statesman" from the age of eighteen till her death, at thirty-two. These facts do not surprise Catholics unduly for they recognize that the high favors and the holiness of the mystics are the logical sequel of those startling words spoken by Christ to all of us at the Last Supper about the inhabitation of our souls by the most Holy Trinity.

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THE PARAMOUNT CHILD

By MARGARET PINCKNEY ALLEN

I WAS born at the crossroads of the world (Times Square)—at the Paramount Theatre, to be precise. In the Marie Antoinette Room (for ladies) just as the principal feature of the program went on, I first saw the light of day. I use the well-worn phrase, though, of course, I do not mean the tawdry and garish effect to which it usually refers. My infant eyes actually opened on that marvelous artificial light, the daylight of the future, with which our patrons are familiar, radiating insistently and without variation from sconces illuminated with the gold and chromatic richness of the French renaissance. And in that golden glow I hope to live until the end.

My mother died on that memorable occasion. Even this palace of entertainment, surpassing in architectural beauty the dream palaces of the Arabian Nights, cannot provide facilities for every human activity. But I like to think that with her romantic nature she saw what an exquisite place it was to die in, stately with rare marble of Italy, carpeted with splendors of the Orient. The pervasive ground-swell of the great organ throbbed through to the black and gold couch on which she reclined, and blended now and then with the nearer notes of the Louis XVII gold piano in the Jade Room just above. How different from her own little home in the Bronx! A snapshot of it was found in her purse and is among my curiosities. No wonder she loved the movies.

Passed the little years! What might have been my fate in this great organization trained to polite precision in the performance of assigned duty, I shudder to think. I might have died from sheer lack of administrative provision for unexpected infants. But among the ushers was one with a heart of gold, which was as good goods as the lovely gold braid on his uniform. An early blighted love had shattered his hope of connubial joy, and he had retired from the world to live happily and usefully in this palace of truly international art. But some thwarted parental passion still glowed in that form, though all day long his arm rose and fell in a West Point manner as he murmured, "Exit this end to the corridor, please."

How he managed to secrete me is his own affair, and the secret died in that valiant, conniving heart a few days ago. I gather that he grudgingly allowed one of the women attendants to see that I was clothed and fed, but he took care of my education.

And what an education! I was unhampered by the continuous physical supervision of the narrow and limited private home, and allowed free range between the hours when I ate and slept. These hours I knew as instinctively as a young animal, and you may be sure I never missed a food-rendezvous. We ate where we could, with food sneaked in somewhere from the world outside. Under such conditions one eats with a zest that turns one into a lion cub. The air I breathed was perfect. Brought into those magnificent walls through a washer and thus freed from the dust of life, it was humidified and warmed all winter and dehumidified and refrigerated all summer. I never knew what a draught was, or a change in temperature, and the seasons were merely a name to me—until that day of horror dawned last week.

And what a place to learn to crawl and walk and run was my palatial Paramount home! Up and down the thickly carpeted staircase in the early morning hours, in and out among the seats on each floor until I had triumphantly scrambled to the very last four thousandth one in the very top row. Then to look down from that last row to the small distant stage with the lights glowing on it, dizzy blue and red and violet, as my friend the spotlight man practised his art! The organ grills of wrought steel, crystal, and illuminated glass would catch these lights at sudden thrilling angles. And repressing a mad impulse to shout aloud—for, of course, I have never spoken above a whisper; no Paramount child should—I would let loose my energies on my stair-sled. My foster-usher had made me this, a little board seat just wide enough to hold me, with rails at each side to grip. What ability I developed, what strength and size in that endless climbing up and down! How my growing soul reveled in the lonely luxury of it all—the deep soft red of the upholstery, the crystal grills with the gigantic tree of life worked in jewels, the glorious golden arches soaring to their ten stories of height, yet somehow achieving that intimate effect which my usher told me had been the aim of the architects in every detail of the building. My only knowledge of "intimate effect" is gained from my beloved Paramount home, but I feel sure there could be no more intimate effect anywhere. How often, when the cleaning women had finished their noiseless vacuum task, I used to lie on my back in the broad cross aisle of the orchestra and look for hours at the wonderful sun in splendor so high above me. I called it my sun, that gorgeous elliptical golden dome, though I seemed to insult it when I did so, when I thought what a pale grey thing was the sunlight of the screen. But it is a pretty word and I knew no other.

What divine play, what a super-childhood it was, I realize from my acquaintance with home life gained from the screen. Home life indeed! Narrow, anaemic, lived in those monotonous greys and whites and blacks which are the colors of so-called real life, under unbelievably restricted surroundings. My whole being shudders at the thought that most of my fellow-creatures are condemned to such prisons. There is a place in such houses called a nursery. You have all

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seen it and I won't describe it, wretched little space that it is, with a few dull toys on the floor! My Paramount "nursery" was a different matter. It was a playground in every part of history which has proved worthy to find a place in interior decoration. There was the Chinoiserie (Ladies' Smoking Room) done in Chinese of French influence; the Venetian Room (Ladies' Cosmetic Room) which was my favorite, perhaps, because each bronze and china fixture represented a lady with the headdress of a special period, from the Elizabethan to the modern bob. I named them all from my favorite heroines of the screen, Gloria, Bebe, Mae, Arleen, and others. Could any little boy have had more thrilling playmates? I spent hours in this room making up stories about them, though only, of course, when it was not being used by the Publix patrons.

Then there were the Peacock Alley, the Club Room, the Hunting Room, the Jade Room, the Powder Box, the Marie Antoinette Room (my revered birthplace), the Music Room, the Colonial Room, the Empire Room. I stored all their lessons in memory. Once, when in the course of play I could not quite fit together the numbers of all the Louis furniture, I asked my usher why there were only Louis Cans and Louis Saze and Louis Eighteen. How well I remember his answer:

"Any Louis that ain't represented in this super-theatre must have been a flop in his day, and you don't need to load up your mind with him."

How I wish all children could learn their history in this way! Those few glorious sovereigns who initiated styles in furniture so that ages later this temple of art should become a magnificent reality—what others, indeed, need we remember?

But my definite school hours began at eleven-fifteen each morning when physical play was over. At that hour, I took my place in an orchestra chair and the world unrolled itself for my pleasure. The jeweled, illuminated fronts of the boxes faded into darkness, the light died out over my white and gold fountains in their crystal niches—all was dark except for the high blue gleam on the tops of golden arches far above me, and there in front of me the magic footlights glowing upward against the deep brocaded crimson of the curtain. Then the world's greatest Wurlitzer would boom out suddenly in a mighty breaking wave of sound which always left me breathless for a few moments. But how I loved its bright, round, mechanical perfection of tone! The first time I heard a violin solo on that stage, I burst out crying. Such a thin, inept, little wail of a sound, touching, I grant you, some strange unaccustomed focus of sensation, but so direfully inadequate beside my wonderful Wurlitzer. Of course, I have had an unexcelled musical education, for there is no effect our organ cannot produce; why, it can produce most of them all at once.

After a short concert came the news of the day. I learned to read with great ease, of course, with the pictures explaining the text, and the text itself so brief and full of feeling. You see, I am the Paramount child that I am largely because I have been spared the insignificant clutter of life. Only the grand, important events of the world are fit to flash upon the silver screen. No wonder that I am old for my age and wise beyond my years. I have never been bothered with the doings of anyone less exalted than the first in their respective fields—presidents and kings, prize-fighters, criminals, actresses, Derby winners, the largest boa-constrictors in the world, and the most stupendous waterfalls. I am unlike any other child in the world and I say it proudly, for I alone am the product of the superlative and the essential. What a happy adult world it will be when all children are children of the theatre! To look on, not to do!—what a perfect motto for an enlightened race!

Then came the animated cartoons. This was the only time when I felt a longing for the meagre world outside. Those marvelous animals! Horses with wings which could jump up and down cliffs more swiftly than the eye could follow. Beautiful, large-faced cows and cats and dogs, racing black and alert across the white plains on which they did such vivid deeds of daring.

After these, with the bracing, stirring music adapted to each item, came the feature picture. Imagine how quickly I came to understand life in all its ramifications and meanings. My foster-usher didn't believe in kiddie-shows for me any more than in infantile food. "Take the whole of it, Buster—girl-shows and all." How wise! I know there must be a woman in every story of the screen and so I am already wise to their ways in life. I am perfectly familiar with the way they hang around men's necks and always must kiss them goodbye at the wrong moment, which makes trouble for them without fail. I know they are meant to be hauled around, and kissed in a long, slow, troubling manner—and they are always there when there is a small baby in the picture. But they don't really count, my usher says. It is marching that is the real thing, and fighting, and great ships at sea, and travel all over the world.

So passed twelve years of my magic life. I could have gone on forever. For, of course, the bill changes every week and sometimes oftener. But fate held other things in store for me. A week ago my foster-usher died. He was out in the world for the morning, and he was carrying back a new suit of clothes for me, for I could never be induced to go out with him and leave this fascinating place. He was run over by a giddy taxi almost opposite our great bronze marquee. Life did not at once flicker out and they sent for me.

Shall I ever forget that first contact of mine with the world? It was eleven-thirty of a morning in March, and suddenly there I was in the open air, bending over the huddled form of the only human being I knew. Gone was the hushed splendor of my beloved gilded Paramount home. The soft lights, the velvet tread,

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the glitter of crystal, the mellow temperature, the silent, expectant, eager crowds of beauty-lovers—all gone. I saw the light of day at last. Horrible! A thin, watery, flat, disillusioning, whitish light fell blankly over the scene. In that light my senses ached with its tension and starvation. And pervading its sterile thinness were a thousand noises. Such noises! The only sounds in life to me had been music exquisitely adapted to my moods, hushed footsteps, and precise, lowered, well-trained voices of ushers. The pandemonium of Times Square tore at my nerves with a myriad claws. I felt my reason leaving me, and I bent lower over my dear and dying protector. Thoughtful of me as ever, he said, "Never mind me, kid. Look up and around. Great little old world, after all. Time to go out into it, Buddy, and help yourself to a swell time."

He sank back. I did not know at first that he was dead. I've seen a good many deaths in the pictures, of course, but they always heaved their chests. He just smiled and ceased to breathe.

I looked up and about at this world which he recommended to me and my heart sank. So little, so squalid, so dusty, so fetid, so raucous, so jumbled, so patchwork! And miles above this colorless crawling confusion, a chill and watery sky. I wept and wept. Was this the world? I wished that I had never seen it.

So I fled back here. And now, in a page-boy's uniform, I have ceased to be an onlooker at life and am doing my part, acting as a guide to those thousands who daily pay tribute to art in this temple. Soon I may become an usher. I am very large for my age and very well-informed, and no one knows so well as I every inch of my Paramount home. I shall live and die happily in Shadowland. For here are to be found relaxation, happiness, and joy.

Windermere

(Lake Legend)

The spirit still surrenders here
Its constant ardor. Here was sung
The haunted music, deathless, clear,
Of poets desolate and young.

But even waters now conceal
The lovely forms which once arose,
And even brooding hills must feel
Stilled ecstasy, the strange repose.

Exulting hearts are stricken dumb
And know what other lips have said.
The waters' voices will not come—
Oh, are they with the poets dead?

Some hidden mystery stills them there
As ashes veil a lovelier Thames,
About the rocks they've caught their hair
Or they are bound by lily stems.

MORTON ZABEL.

GERMAN PROTESTANTISM

By JOHN STAPLETON

IN MOST countries, it is no longer possible to consider Protestantism as anything but a conglomeration of varying sects, or, at best, as a generic term covering all those Christian organizations which, in greater or less degree, champion the principle of private judgment without carrying their negation of authority to its fatal, logical conclusion. Protestantism as an individual, positive entity, a unified movement, or even a unified outlook on life, hardly exists anywhere today, even in the so-called "Protestant countries."

In the home of Protestantism, however—in Germany, that is—there is still a serious effort to give more than a vague, merely negative-classificatory content to the word, and a characteristic example of this endeavor appeared not long ago in the Europäische Revue, published at Leipzig. It was written by a well-known German Evangelical pastor, Dr. René Wallau, of Frankfort, and his opening paragraphs betray the apprehension felt by many Protestants in Europe lest their disunion, too long continued in the face of the renewed Catholic effort in all parts of the world, may have disastrous consequences, even in those countries where the non-Catholic religious Weltanschauung—for we must leave aside the mere materialistic anti-Catholic movement of thought—has been entrenched for centuries.

It is no longer enough for Protestantism to be anti-Catholic, for Catholicity, says Dr. Wallau, has been generally recognized in the New Testament. The object of the protest of Protestantism changes with each generation—and here a kind of theory of development on the Newman model is attempted. But the proclamation positively of what Protestantism stands for—that is the vital problem. The solution, according to this thoughtful writer, must be sought in a union of the modern liturgical movement in German Protestantism with a renewed evangelical universalism.

Here is the basis of the new synthesis, but there will be no solid building on it until the opposition of the older generation is overcome. The younger generation has to struggle against a too great emphasis on the individual in relation to God, a too little appreciation of man as a member of society. The tendency, in whose encouragement Dr. Wallau seems to see the only prospect of thoroughgoing Protestant rehabilitation, is today toward the ecumenical principle—the recognition of the Church as an organization in relation to the community. It is this that inspires the fervid effort toward Protestant reunion shown in the Stockholm Conference.

Faith, of course; the fundamental principles of New Testament Christianity—these must be preserved. But, given these, the main problem is "Gestaltung," the outward and visible form in which Protestantism shall present these to the world and make clear their relationship with the world of today. Religion must no longer be a personal individual thing, a matter for the heart; it must be given an agreed outward manifestation and brought into contact with social and political realities. Apparently this is to be done by the adoption of the primitive Christian forms of service, imposed as a discipline, but informed by modern social ideas.

Perhaps, although he does not mention it, Dr. Wallau is thinking of something parallel to the so-called "free Catholic" movement which has made some stir in England. He should, however, know that that movement has already resulted in the passage of a number of well-known clergymen to the Anglo-Catholic party of the Church of England, whence their transi-

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tion to Catholicism is but a logical, if not an inevitable step. Or if he is dreaming of a High-Church movement in the German Lutheran Church, on less "Roman" lines than such a movement has already followed, he must know that this must inevitably increase the inner and outward disunion or Zerrissenheit which he so much deplores.

If Dr. Wallau's sincere article is to be taken as at all characteristic of the present tendency in German Protestantism, it is clear that there is, on the one hand, a strong though vague feeling that only a visible church, possessing authority, can save Protestantism; and, on the other, that there is a rather pathetic belief that harking back to primitive forms can meet the situation. One wonders whether Dr. Wallau has ever wandered through the Catacombs and considered the primitive belief which was the only raison d'être of the primitive forms. The symbol of the Mass and the invocation of Petrine authority still have lessons, even for twentieth-century German Protestants in search of a unified, vital Gestaltung without which, as Dr. Wallau rightly perceives, the non-Catholic Christian world can never hope to rescue itself from anarchy and face the future with confidence.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE CLEAN BOOKS BILL

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—Possibly your recent editorial favoring the Clean Books bill, now before a committee of the legislature of the state of New York, represents clerical sentiment; but I doubt that it corresponds with the judgment of the laity, for whom your review will be widely quoted as speaking.

You are in strange company, indeed, when you consort with some of its proponents: a confessedly inadequate parent, whose main desideratum apparently is to force the state to wield a salutary slipper; a paid reformer, who acts as a caretaker for a cellar full of smut; and a clergyman, whose notion as to what constitutes obscenity is hardly likely to be that of the average citizen. Yes, you might be in better company. For instance, Governor Smith, a whole man (ergo, an adequate parent) has not evinced any keen desire for the bill's passage. Nor have the members of the writing trade, who seem to have deserted you—or is it possible that you have deserted them?

So much for your doubtful bed-fellows. Anent the bill itself, surely your viewpoint deserves questioning. If, on the liquor question, you hold to the sound Christian doctrine that man's morals are to be bettered by moral suasion rather than by the force incident to legislation, why do you not apply the same tradition to pornographic literature? In a community whose laws are sufficiently stringent to bar Mr. Frank Harris's My Life and My Loves, why must you have a stricter standard, which might bar, let us say, The Cenci, Oedipus Rex, the Satyricon, or The Country Wife? And, if it be argued that there is no intent to estop established classics, why is obscenity not as harmful in the old tomes as in the new? If obscenity be harmful to the spiritual welfare of an adult, what is the present moral state of Mr. John S. Sumner, who reads monthly more filth than the man on the street comes across in a lifetime? If it be held that this gentleman's constant contact with pornographia renders him impervious to any ill effect, why not let us all gloat over more and smuttier stuff?

But it is said that our main concern is with the child, and not with the adult. Now it happens to be my belief that an innocent young girl reacts to obscenity as did young Jacqueline in M. Rolland's Jean Christophe; but, assuming that the maiden does delight in swimming in sewage, whose duty is it to supervise her reading: her parents' or the state's? And if it is fundamental that a parent has not only the responsibility, but the right of determining the manner of his child's intellectual education, why do not the same right and responsibility apply to the child's moral education? If all literature must be suppressed, except that suitable for a twelve-year old damsel, what will happen to Leviticus?

Will obscenity in letters be eliminated any sooner than it is eradicated from human nature? Is blasphemy any less frequent in Connecticut, where a statute makes it punishable? Why have certain words persisted in the vulgar speech for hundreds of years, despite being barred from print? What constitutes obscenity, anyhow, and whose definition do you prefer: a Puritan's or a gentleman's?

DONALD POWELL.

MODERN DEMOCRACIES

Ottawa, Canada.

TO the Editor:—In an editorial note in a recent issue of The Commonweal, doubt is expressed as to the wisdom of the past efforts of the United States to "Americanize two vast continents," the final result in Mexico being, as the writer says, "legal, economic, and political chaos."

In the opinion of the late Lord Bryce, expressed in Modern Democracies, the last and best of his books, the most fatal gift of the United States to Spanish America was its form of government. Some of the Spanish American countries, notably Chile, Argentine, Brazil, and Uruguay are now, he admits, true republics and have become, or are on the way to becoming, genuine democracies. This result has been due to causes which he discusses and has been attained in spite of the inappropriateness of their form of government when originally adopted. Political conditions in the other states vary greatly. In the lowest class, comprising those that have, so far, made no advance whatever toward the adoption of real democratic government, he places Mexico. Of her, and the others of that class, he remarks that whatever they are, they certainly are not republics; and he goes on to say:

"But it is one of the oddest instances of the power of a word that the less educated and even many of the more educated persons among free nations, especially in the United States, have continued to believe them to be, because called 'republics,' entitled to a confidence and sympathy which would not be given to a military tyranny under any other name. . . .

"Why confer free self-governing institutions on a people unfit to comprehend or use them? The very notion of establishing a government by the votes of citizens and controlling the action of a legislature and an executive by holding the representatives responsible for the use they might make of their power, was not within the horizon of the vast bulk of the colonial subjects of Spain, much less could they work the elaborate machinery of two legislative Houses with an elected President and his ministers. In such circumstances, power inevitably fell to the executive head, the person whom the people could see and know and to whom belonged the command of the army. . . . The people did not rule because they could not rule. Whatever the plans of theorists and the exhortations of the wise, every people comes sooner or later to that kind of government which the facts prescribe. . . . Thus a nominally elective Presidency became a dictatorship. . . .

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"Those who look back with the experience of a century can see that the form which was adopted, suggested by the example of the United States Constitution, was unsuitable. No wonder it failed. What would have happened if things had been left to take their natural course and no attempt made to imitate the United States Constitution?"

He answers this question by suggesting three possible lines of development, any one of which would, he thinks, have led to better results; and he concludes:

"These are speculations. But about the moral of the whole story there is no question. Do not give to a people institutions for which it is unripe in the simple faith that the tool will give skill to the workman's hand. Respect facts. Man is in each country, not what we may wish him to be, but what nature and history have made him."

W. L. Scott.

"TWO RELIGIONS" OF ANGLICANISM

Minneapolis, Minn.

TO the Editor:—An astonishing article appeared in your issue of February 16 ("Two Religions" of Anglicanism, by Henry S. Whitehead) and I have waited to see if any statement by the editor of The Commonweal would be forthcoming, giving his reason for including this article in a periodical designed to represent the Catholic point of view. Under the caption, Contributors, in this same number, we read, "Reverend Henry S. Whitehead was formerly pastor of several prominent parishes of the Episcopal Church. . . ." This, needless to say, throws no light on Mr. Whitehead's present church affiliation, but it would be unfortunate if the reader should infer that Mr. Whitehead, once an Episcopal minister, were now a Catholic and that, therefore, his article contains presumably sound Catholic teaching.

In religious controversy, good manners and charity should, of course, prevail so long as good manners and charity do not blur or obscure the truth, or make one side appear to give countenance and tacit approval to statements which it regards not only as false, but distinctly heretical and damnable (anathema). I do not suggest that the Reverend Mr. Whitehead is engaging in controversy with Catholics, but I suggest that his article contains controversial matter in statements which have been solemnly condemned by the Pope speaking in the name of the Church Universal. The editor of The Commonweal, then, should have made some definite explanations, exposing those errors, either in the very issue he permitted the article to appear, or in the following issue. Not finding any such explanations in these two issues, I write this letter to protest against an editorial policy of a supposedly Catholic periodical which permits without comment such passages as the following:

"The importance [of the Protestant Episcopal Church] rests upon solid foundations. Of these the chief is the fact that the Protestant Episcopal Church is an integral portion of the great Anglican communion, one of the three historic branches of the original Church founded by Christ, as distinct from any sect." "It means that some Anglicans are practising the Catholic religion while the rest use another." "Catholics [all kinds, his fellow-Anglican included, of course] . . ." "The theology of historic Christendom, i.e., Catholic theology, as distinct from that which is essentially 'Roman.'" "Whole sections of Anglicans are now definitely Catholic." "Anglo-Catholicism derives its power from the two facts that is it, definitely and intentionally, within the main stream of the Christian tradition."

Moreover, you have permitted to appear in this article unchallenged, without even the saving grace of inverted commas, such words as "Anglo-Catholic" and "Anglo-Catholicism." It is needless, I trust, to touch upon all the implications arising from the use of these words. They are, as employed by the Reverend Henry S. Whitehead, an offense and a heresy. Shall we, without protest, suffer, on the pages of a Catholic journal, Anglicans to apply to themselves that name which can rightly be applied only to such Catholics as happen to be English, like Mr. Chesterton or the Abbot of Downside?

Cortlandt van Winkle.

Owego, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I do seriously regret that my informative article on "Two Religions" of Anglicanism should have distressed your correspondent of March 9; or anyone, indeed.

Perhaps on reflection your correspondent will come to the realization that an Anglican cannot write otherwise than from the Anglican viewpoint, at least without stultifying himself and, incidentally, destroying any interest or value his contribution might have.

My allusion to the validity of Anglicanism was, also (while, of course, a matter of conviction) less related to any admiration I may be supposed to have for the branch theory than a mere matter of phraseology. I do not believe that Our Dear Lord founded three churches! I bewail what Anglicans call "our unhappy divisions." I am aware that Anglicans and the Orthodox are out of communion with the Holy Father. I am equally persuaded that neither Anglicans (my own communion) nor the Orthodox can be reasonably classed with sectarian Protestants. I endeavored to present a really delicate matter in such wise that Anglicans could not be given offense by what I said, and "Romans" should not.

When two religious bodies like "Rome" and Anglicanism are in formal controversy, it is, obviously, not the immediate fault of either the editors of The Commonweal or an Anglican priest to whom they offer the honor of writing in their esteemed columns, and the difficulties involved should be met (as you have met them) with both understanding of the underlying facts and with that courtesy which commonly prevails among gentlefolk. Otherwise—how can rapprochement be consummated? How is it even possible to hear a variant viewpoint?

Rev. Henry S. Whitehead.

THE MODERN ANGLICAN CHURCH

Peekskill, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—Does not the final sentence of your Marlborough-Vanderbilt editorial of November 24, 1926, rest on an historical confusion of heresy with schism? You write: "In the very early history of his own communion Bishop Manning may find conclusive evidence of how impervious to expediency Rome can show itself when not satisfied by the evidence that even a king could procure and present." You seem to say that the modern Anglican Church was founded by Henry VIII. If so, I should like to protest that such a hint is altogether mistaken.

Henry's schismatic church came to an end on November 30, 1554, when Henry's cousin, Cardinal Pole, restored England to the Catholic obedience and communion. Because of the reconciliation thus effected by the last legitimate primate of Canterbury, it is historically impossible for Bishop Manning's hierarchy to have any organic continuity whatsoever with the schism originated by Henry VIII.

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Anglo-Catholics may believe today much as Henry did after his lapse from Catholicism, but it is beyond dispute that Elizabeth was crowned by the Roman Catholic Bishop Oglethorpe of Carlisle on January 15, 1559, according to the customary Roman Catholic coronation rite and ceremonial. Within a few feet of the relics of Saint Edward the Confessor and in a crowded abbey—Benedictine monks looking down upon the gay scene from the southern triforium of the choir—Elizabeth gave her solemn oath to maintain the Roman Catholic religion as under Mary Tudor.

Absolutely every one of Parker's four so-called consecrators (Barlow, Scory, Hodgkins, Coverdale) was a non-diocesan, wandering bishop at the time of his participation in the historic Lambeth Palace ceremony. The English law unquestionably required the metropolitan and three provincial bishops, or at least four bishops holding sees, to confirm the election of a new primate. Barlow, Scory, Hodgkins, and Coverdale had no more right to consecrate an archbishop of Canterbury than an archbishop of Paris or Moscow. To cure this defect of jurisdiction Elizabeth had to step in; an enabling Act of Parliament was passed. It is evident, therefore, that any ecclesiastical jurisdiction held today by the Anglican hierarchy comes from the two Acts of Parliament of May 8, 1559. Bishop Manning's church had no organic existence previous to that date.

D. Barclay.

MEETING UNEMPLOYMENT

Somerville, Mass.

TO the Editor:—I am of the opinion that in addition to plans already advanced to increase export trade and investigations proposed to promote inactive industries (more or less perfunctory, the result of which is simply a report) if, at stated intervals, letters or a printed form of inquiry could be mailed to every commercial activity that affects the employment situation, by a Chamber of Commerce, Board of Trade or similar civic organization, with the following questions for consideration, submitted in whatever form may be determined most efficacious, it would prove advantageous: The number of days per week industry is actively engaged; the length of time advance orders will keep industry active; differences, if any, between employer and employee, and the nature of them; if business is inactive, the reasons attributable for its inactivity by officials interested; if business conditions are irregular, because of changing styles, tariff conditions, competition, labor conditions, inadequate transportation facilities, supply and demand not equitably adjusted, etc.

The Chamber of Commerce, Board of Trade or similar civic body locally and nationally could investigate, and if differences existed between employer and employee they could be submitted to a state or national board of arbitration, and, if a question of legislation, a report could be submitted to our honorable state or national legislature; or if foreign markets are necessary for the promotion of any commodity, our foreign commerce or diplomatic service could propose matter for consideration; and if domestic competition is an important factor, or unreasonable taxation an issue, it could be a matter of subject for discussion and adjustment. Other commercial activities could be proposed for various communities, consistent with environment and labor conditions.

Industries should be discouraged from changing to other localities, in order to keep its personnel from removing to other districts, affecting local trade conditions, etc., while the uniformity of an established town or city is disturbed.

A maximum of employment would prevail if the interests concerned would act concertedly rather than reduce the personnel for reasons of economy and efficiency, with no provision for their employment in other industries being advanced, often resulting in the displacement of persons already employed and equally dependent on its continuance for support. The maximum of employment will also discourage the teaching of Bolshevism, communism, and anarchism.

William H. Bastion.

CZECHO-SLOVAKIAN AFFAIRS

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—By my first letter addressed to you on behalf of the present state of Czecho-Slovakian affairs, I did not intend to begin a polemic in your columns, but simply felt obliged to put in the right light some obviously erroneous statements misrepresenting the evolution of Czecho-Slovakian affairs in which the Czecho-Slovakian Catholic Popular party has been sharing the responsibility during the last three parliamentary governments.

It causes me a real satisfaction, therefore, that in ending my correspondence with you, I can inform you that on January 16, 1927, both representatives of the Slovak Catholic Popular party, Dr. Tisso and Dr. Gazik, mentioned in my first letter to you, were appointed Ministers of Public Health and of Unification respectively, increasing thereby the number of Catholic members in the cabinet to five.

It is obvious that a government of this composition would not and could not settle the outstanding religious and political problems of Czecho-Slovakia in a sense adverse to the feelings of her Catholic citizens, but the settlements reached on these intricate problems will be the more durable and acceptable if they are dealt with by all interested parties in a spirit of mutual tolerance, understanding, and loyalty without which modern political life in its complicated intercourse would be unmanageable and even impossible.

Peregrin Fiša.

THE MERCURY SCHOOL AND METHODISTS

Denton, Texas.

TO the Editor:—Mr. Denis A. McCarthy of Boston, Massachusetts, in a communication to The Commonweal headed The Mercury School and Methodists, advises Catholic editors not to imitate the abusive style which is used by the Mercury in mauling the Methodists and Baptists. When the Mercury has finished mauling these two sects, will it not find pleasure in mauling the Catholic Church? May Catholic editors take the good advice of Mr. McCarthy, and cease using terms against non-Catholics which will alienate them from us. Christ was surrounded by enemies, but He never stooped to use abusive terms. Even Judas was greeted as a friend. Why spill ink in the use of words which do more harm than good? May all our Catholic editors be dignified and sweet in their productions. It is the better way. Most Catholics are ignorant of Catholic teachings, but are we Catholics not to blame? Why do we not let our light shine?

Rev. Raymond Vernimont.

(The Commonweal invites its readers to send in communications expressing individual views on all topics that are of public interest, regardless of whether or not such topics have been previously discussed in its columns.—The Editors.)

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POEMS

The Great Singing

This is the great singing—
  Nothing mean or small of it,
For the Voice of the Lord is ringing
  In the splendid rise and fall of it.

This is the great singing
  Which sweeps with the winds of heaven,
Clear and strong and swinging
  Down to the hush of even.

This is the great singing
  Which sees all nature's story
Through its seasons back to its springing,
  March in an ordered glory.

This is the great singing
  Which shows us the hidden Spirit
In the things the world missed winging,
  And counted of little merit.

This is the great singing
  Which, scorning man's law and fashion,
Still to the star-way clinging,
  Throbs with a nobler passion.

This is the great singing
  Which toils with truth and duty,
And comes rejoicing and bringing
  The golden sheaves of beauty.

Hail to the great singing!
  Nothing mean or small of it,
For the Voice of the Lord is ringing
  Through the perfect rises and fall of it!

DOROTHY FRANCES GURNEY.

Inland

Here in the valley is peace. Perhaps you are able
To suffer the calm of each far, grave hill and immutable star,
And not hunger and thirst for the sea and the brown, unstable
Sand and the quick-wheeling gull. It is well if you are.

I should be like a young girl with my youth made plunder
To age—knowing only the old, going their silent, old, wise ways;
Rebelliously shut from life, and its surge and its thunder,
Troubled by echoes of dreams through my quiet days.

PHYLLIS MCGINLEY.

Ebb Tide

The sea comes edging up the beach,
Reaching, clutching.
It will never get farther.

Twice every day the tides soothe its hunger
With a few yards of gain.

Twice every day they draw it back,
Unappeased, groping.

KATHRYN WHITE RYAN.

Adventure

Why should I seek adventure in strange places
  Or countries far away
When I know what adventure matches paces
  With my own every day?

If I but leave you, dear, and pass that curtain
  To find a pipe or pen,
I know that I can never be quite certain
  I shall return again.

If I permit my glance from yours to sever
  What time the eyelids fall
I cannot surely know that I shall ever
  See you again at all.

I cannot raise my hand to fondle simply
  Your hand or cheek or hair
But it may fall beside my body limply
  And never reach you there.

I cannot speak one word however aimless
  That I can surely tell
(God grant my words to you be ever blameless!)
  'Tis not our last farewell.

Why should I seek adventure in strange places
  Or countries far away
When I know what adventure matches paces
  With my own every day?

MAURICE DOOLING.

Forfeit

You! Nora said, "A gentleman to call."
I never dreamed . . . . Welcome! Though you're disguised
With eastern sun I would have recognized
You anywhere. Come, let us leave the hall
Voices disturb Aunt Sarah; she has grown
Hostile to visitors. We'll have our tea
Under the old acacia. Can it be
Twenty-one years since you were here? The throne
Is just as strong as when you built it; I
Still sit on it—not often—now and then
At twilight or at dawn; odd moments when
The family does not need me. This is Vi,
My oldest niece. She says the throne should be
Given to her, it's so little use to me!

MARGARET TOD RITTER.

El Dorado

Was it written in the stars
Or in my poor horoscope,
Or the speeding calendars—
I should follow after hope?

Still adventurer, I must
Seek out Ninevah or Rome;
Quick, before the dream is dust
Or the wanderer turns home!

HAROLD VINAL.

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THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By R. DANA SKINNER

Earth

SWIFT upon the reverberations of Lawson's Loud Speaker comes Earth, by Em Jo Basshe. It is the second in the repertory group to be presented by the New Playwrights Theatre and will alternate every second or third day with Loud Speaker until a third play is added to the list. Earth is the kind of production to stir considerably more interest in this new theatre than the surface eccentricities of Loud Speaker—a play of deep feeling, staged with a fine eye to drama and movement, and reflecting the ultra-modern mind only in the pervading confusion of its idea.

Earth is a Negro play, acted, apparently, by an entirely Negro cast, and deals with the religious emotionalism rampant in a small Negro village of the South some forty or more years ago. A distorted Christianity and a violent voodooism are locked in perpetual conflict, first one and then the other emotion sweeping the community with utter disregard of logic, the essence of the struggle being summed up in the souls of Deborah and her husband Abner.

So far as the story can be told in individual terms, Deborah is being tried like a modern Job and succumbs, whereas her husband maintains his humble faith throughout. These are proud people, all of them, but none prouder than Deborah, whose self-righteousness ill fits her to withstand the loss of her last son. He is murdered by the community for holding intercourse with Senon the voodoo leader. Thereupon Deborah's faith begins to ebb from her. For twenty years she has trusted in the Lord, but now she will trust no longer unless He returns her son to her. She will bargain with God. The villagers, led by their blind preacher, Brother Elijah, try to bring her back to the ways of faith. They pray upon and around her. They surround her with a ritual of song. At last she follows them to the mountain-top, in the midst of a great forest fire which the villagers believe has been sent to them from the wrath of God. It was, in fact, started by the vengeful Senon.

But self-righteousness brings its own punishment everywhere. As the fire creeps closer and closer, even Brother Elijah loses faith. The Christian hymns slowly slip into voodoo chants. By the light of the shooting flames, the voodoo ritual begins—an appeal to God's enemy to grant what God has withheld. Only Abner, now tied to a tree, raises his voice in supplication to God. His prayer is heard. The fire spares his home and sends to his cabin door a cow, the omen of future prosperity. The villagers begin to repent their apostasy. They set up again the cross they had uprooted, and the dark night of voodoo passes, but not before Deborah, unknown to them, has killed Senon as a sacrifice.

Deborah, thinking she has won in her bargain, again becomes the self-righteous one. She treats the starving villagers with proud condescension. She will not share her food with them. They are suffering their deserved fate, whereas she has been singled out for blessings. She does not heed Abner's warnings. The cow disappears and is lost in the quicksands. Abner accepts this as the second judgment of God, but Deborah's new-found faith vanishes as quickly as it returned. The villagers crowd in. Deborah cries against the Lord. They kill her as the source of all their misery, and depart, chanting their song of freedom, leaving Abner alone.

Obviously, this is neither a pleasant play nor one which is conspicuously relieved by clear understanding. Abner is an underwritten part, the main conflicts coming between characters all equally blind to true spiritual values. In its way, it is an excellent study of the evils of a purely emotional Christianity—a religion which borders so closely on voodooism that the two often blend in the minds of an hysterical people. But, by not providing these forces with a sufficiently strong protagonist, the play fails in dramatic emphasis, not to mention spiritual truth.

Adam Solitaire, a former play by the same author, also written about the Job theme, revealed a much finer sense of spiritual proportion, a clearer understanding of the meaning of the Via Crucis in the life of man. It would be unfair to say that the same understanding is absent in Earth, but it is certainly not brought forth as clearly in dramatic terms. And thus the new play, as a study in earth-bound religion, comes dangerously near the appearance of a bitter indictment of all religion and a general rebellion against all suffering and the cruelty of man under religious impulse. I can easily imagine the casual playgoer getting the impression that it is a blasphemous play—instead of accepting it as a story of the self-destruction that has been wrought by self-righteous pride and its emotional consequences.

In one respect, however, Earth is a much more skilful play than most of those which deal with cosmic religious forces. It does not label its symbols. It does not, as the phrase has it, "go Rann Kennedy." The abundant symbolism you can find in the play springs spontaneously from the poet's mind. The fact that Brother Elijah is blind is never forced on you, for example. Throughout, Mr. Basshe shows a definite willingness to stay within the viewpoints of his own characters, leaving the audience to draw its own conclusions and seek its own interpretations. This is a healthy sign—a reaction, if you will, against the more recent technique of Eugene O'Neill, who, in making his symbols more and more conscious through the use of masks and various other similar devices, has weakened the inherent dramatic force of his plays.

In many respects, the production itself is excellent, although made with obvious economy in scenic material. Nor is it easy to explain the use of Catholic holy pictures on the walls of Deborah's cabin! But the use of spirituals and chants to heighten the effect of certain scenes, and the groupings and rhythmic power of the scenes themselves display a fine sense of the theatre in the creation of a mood. Above all, however, the acting of Inez Clough as Deborah, and of Daniel L. Haynes as Brother Elijah brought to this play something far out of the ordinary in emotional power expressed through great restraint. I have seen no finer acting of its kind this winter. To Earle Browne is due the credit for the general direction of the play. A dangerous play because of its lack of spiritual proportion in dramatic terms, but, within this limitation, a powerful piece of writing.

Thou Desperate Pilot

THE past week marked the opening and closing of a new play by no less practised a dramatist than Zoë Akins, presented under the auspices of Rachel Crothers and Mary Kirkpatrick. A few cynics, having seen the play, might ask, "Why the opening?" It is rather more to the point to say, "Why the

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prompt closing?" What light does it throw on the much heralded vicissitudes of managers? The theme was sexy, the situations "daring," the language unfettered, and the acting fair to good. It possessed all the "makings," one might say, of a box-office success.

Well—it was one of the best examples I have seen of an author becoming fascinated by an idea, or a title, to the exclusion of real feeling, genuine characterization, and effective dramatic construction. Perhaps the atmosphere of a Casino on the Riviera is not conducive to real interest. But one dislikes to think that real drama cannot be found wherever flesh and blood wanders on this earth. The Dybbuk took a small and isolated sect of Jews and made real drama out of the setting. Cradle Song takes a convent of Dominican nuns and makes that cloistered life reflect the emotions of all humanity. Neither time nor place should rule a play out of popular acceptance. Witness Caponsacchi as another example. But false sentimentality, artificial emotions, and the effort to make puppets do the author's bidding will devitalize the most authentic situation. That is what Miss Akins has done in Thou Desperate Pilot, and so, "this seasick weary bark" has "now at once run on the dashing rocks." A title has become its own epitaph, because a play was hung on a title instead of growing out of it. A play without roots.

Metropolis

THERE is an increasing interest in every new German film, due to the amazing advances the Germans have made in the technique of photography. Metropolis is the latest of these UFA productions to reach us, and although much heralded, and in spite of many amazingly fine individual scenes, it is, on the whole, quite the worst German film so far.

In fairness, it must be stated that the American showing gives only nine of the original sixteen reels. It may be that the genius of Hollywood has cut out the best and left us only the most absurd parts. But the real objection is to the material included. In this story of a mythical mechanical civilization many years hence—presumably a prophecy of what we are coming to in America—the workmen live in an underground city. They march to and from work in chain gangs. They faint under the strain of their work to keep the machines going. This, of course, is a complete reversal of our experience with the labor-saving value of machinery. Perhaps standardization and machinery will eat all individuality from the human heart. They may make machines of men. But they will not crush men with machines. They may make humanity aspire to be God, and so destroy itself. But they will not make humanity a slave to anything but itself. Starting with a false idea, Metropolis pushes its weary way through a maze of sentimentalities and absurdities until it reaches the scenic grandeur of the final reel. Here the strength of the new German technique comes into full play, with picture after picture of the stupendous power of unleashed forces, human and mechanical—the flooding of the underground city, the breaking of the giant machines, the crashing of the dreams of man, destruction, and the orgy of revolutionary hatred. The picture is worth seeing for these scenes. But if the Hollywood idea and the German idea must be mixed, it makes a lot of difference which is poured into the other. Metropolis is UFA gone Hollywood.

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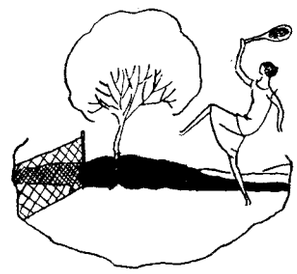

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BOOKS

King Goshawk and the Birds, by Eimar O'Duffy. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

THE fact that many of the newer Irish writers are apt to deal with life in harsh or in violent terms is not an unhopeful sign—rather it shows that what used to be called "the Irish revival" is by no means a flash in the pan. Twenty years ago it might have been supposed that Irish literary activity was no more than realization on a traditional store of quaint, charming, and idyllic matter. But Irish literary activity still goes on, and it has made itself independent of just that sort of matter. As she emerges from political subjection Ireland produces writers who are capable of dealing harshly and grimly with aspects of the national life: this shows that the revival has been powerful enough to carry over from an era of hopefulness, of heroic aspiration, to an era of criticism. Obviously, these writers are racial; they are of the sod of Ireland; they are inheritors of a portion of the Irish mind. I do not now refer to James Joyce: Joyce, to my mind, finishes rather than begins an era—I refer to writers like Liam O'Flaherty and Eimar O'Duffy—men who have grown up during the struggle that has eventuated in the establishment of the Irish Free State.

A vein of satire has been disclosed by them; these newer writers seem disposed to take the conventions and the convictions that the present Ireland grew out of, and to treat them savagely. And why not? Satire of the harshest and the fiercest kind has always been part of the Irish mind, has always been present in Irish literature, and the fact that it is cropping out today shows that the impulse which has made for so much liberation is not slackening, that it is showing itself capable of restoring something which belongs very definitely to the racial mind.

Eimar O'Duffy has been compared to James Stephens. Now this comparison, although made by the foremost writer in Ireland, is not correct. He may be like Stephens on the outside, but he has no inner likeness to that unbiased man. Internally, he is much more related to James Joyce. His satire does not approach Joyce's—it is a satire on the social life of man whereas Joyce's is a satire on life itself. But Eimar O'Duffy in the sort of satire he uses in King Goshawk and the Birds, is capable of a detachment that produces something like the startling effect of Joyce's detachment. Pity and irony make the method of French satire; passion and irony make the method of Irish satire; and Swift, with the passion that is behind his irony, shows the Irish mark. The young writer of King Goshawk and the Birds puts passion behind his irony.

It is true that this writer is not very new. Fourteen years ago, in a review which I had just surrendered, there was published a play by him called The Walls of Athens. He has published several books since, but it seems to me that the book which I am reviewing has in it a vitality, an invention, an imperfection which suggests that it will have successors worth looking out for.

King Goshawk and the Birds is in the manner of the mock-heroic romance, a manner which has been taken over from old Irish literature. Goshawk, an American multi-millionaire, resolves to corner all the singing birds in the world, and thereafter, all the wild flowers in the world. The birds are to be put into his own aviary, but a certain number of them will be left in municipal aviaries where the public, for a slight fee (for the public only appreciates what it has to pay for) will be allowed to hear their singing. A philosopher in Dublin resolves to baffle his attempt at a new monopoly: he brings back to earth the spirit of the hero Cuchullain to act as champion and guardian of the birds and flowers. Cuchullain cannot exist in the Ireland of today—he is too simple and too impetuous: he begets a hero, his bride being a millionaire's daughter, and this hero, Cu-an-duine, the Hound of Man, is given to the philosopher to help man to win back the flowers and the song-birds. Cu-an-duine fails in his quests for the very good reason that neither the people of Ireland nor of England will permit themselves to be roused into action. The hero is baffled. He does one thing only—he intervenes in a war to chastise a dictator.

There are imperfections in the story and they are due to the fact that the writer does not stick to his point. The war that the hero intervenes in has nothing to do with the birds and the flowers. But even before we have come to the war we have ceased to feel that Cu-an-duine has a single flaming interest in the flowers and the singing birds. The story is full of digressions. Not more digressions, however, than are in Eimar O'Duffy's master's Tale of a Tub. But this new writer should have learned from Swift one lesson—the lesson of never relaxing grip upon the idea that is to be illustrated. It is the great fault of this most entertaining book that grip is lost on the idea toward the end of the story. It is also a weakness in the book that many of the things satirized are really due to temporary and local circumstances.

But, with all these imperfections, King Goshawk and the Birds is extraordinarily lively—so lively that it makes several highbrow books popular at the moment seem very dead-and-alive. And it is interesting to note how themes taken from an old literature can be put to entertaining use by a writer of today familiar with such motives. "The pillow-chat of Goshawk and Guzzelind, his queen, which opens the story, derives from the pillow-chat of Aillil and Queen Maeve in the opening of the epic-tale, The Tain Bo Cuilgne.

PADRAIC COLUM.

A History of Medicine from the Time of the Pharaohs to the End of the Eighteenth Century, by Charles Greene Cumston. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $5.00.

THIS is one of the series of books on The History of Civilization which is planned to comprise more than two hundred volumes covering every aspect of the subject. The authors of the twenty-five volumes which already have been published are among the most distinguished of present-day scholars. Such books as History and Literature of Christianity from Tertullian to Boethius, by Professor P. De Labriolle; Mesopotamia, the Babylonian and Assyrian Civilization, by L. De Laporte; The Roman Spirit, Its Religion, Thought and Art, by Albert Grenier of the University of Strasbourg; and The Dawn of European Civilization, by V. Gordon Childe, have already appeared. For this spring are announced Life and Labor in Europe in the Middle-Ages, by Professor Boissonard; The Civilization of the South American Indians, by Rafael Karsten; and Rome, the Lawgiver, by J. Declareuil.

The selection of Dr. Greene Cumston, lecturer on the history of medicine and medical philosophy at the University of Geneva, to write the medical volume, was wise. His special contributions to the history of medicine have been valuable. The history proper is preceded by an introductory essay on The Relation of History and Philosophy to Medicine, by Dr. F. G. Crookshank of London. It was formerly the custom for physicians to be also doctors of philosophy—an excellent combination. Dr. Crookshank holds that the motto of the physician

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should be the saying of Baglivi, the great Italian physiologist who lived for a time in Rome as an intimate friend of the Popes: "Novi veteribus: non opponendi, sed quoad fieri potest, perpetuo jungendi foedere." He deprecates the use of "Jones' Snappy Aids to Medicine" or "Smith's Bright Tips on Diagnosis," and does not hesitate to affirm that "the false systematization in terms of definite 'diseases' with special signs, symptoms, etiology and morbid anatomy, so dear to the physicians of last century, shows everywhere evidence of breaking down under the self-imposed strain, whilst a reaction toward Hippocratic methods of diagnosis and prescription is once more clearly marked."

Dr. Cumston's account is interesting not only for the useful information it contains, but also because it tells the story of what has been tried and found wanting. The successive chapters of the cures that have failed are extremely valuable. We may be surprised that today there should be a thousand chiropractors in a city like New York, but if we go back nearly two thousand years to Rome, among a people of like culture, we find charlatans of all kinds flourishing there. One of them, Thessalus, was always accompanied by numerous disciples and patients whom he had cured, and to whom he had promised to impart the secrets of medicine in six months. Thessalus held that the physicians of the Hippocratic sect were foolish. We of the present esteem Hippocrates more highly than ever, but then, in our day, the founder of osteopathy thought that Pasteur was a fool and Lister a knave, so that history is only repeating itself.

Dr. Cumston devotes an especially interesting chapter to the history of medicine in the middle-ages. It used to be thought that there was no medical study worth talking of in the middle-ages, but the development of the history of science in recent years has completely destroyed this notion. The surprise is to find how thoroughly surgery was developed during the medieval period, in spite of the fact that Lister's discovery of antisepsis was reserved for our day. A particularly striking growth of surgical knowledge took place in the later middle-ages; in fact, there seems no doubt that the science was understood better and practised more about the middle of the thirteenth century than it was about the middle of the nineteenth century. Of course, surgery and hospitals had sunk to their lowest ebb in modern times about seventy-five years ago. It is an interesting fact that, at the time when Dr. Draper was writing so contemptuously about the science of the middle-ages and suggesting that the Church was responsible for the suppression of any originality that men might display in the healing art, he was the attending physician at Bellevue, a hospital far below the hospitals of the middle-ages in appointments and furnishings; and that the surgery of his time was a disgrace compared to the surgery of seven centuries earlier.

We have learned to make this contrast, not from traditions, but from the actual text-books of the teachers of surgery at that time. There are many precious documents, including, above all, the Regimen of Health of Salerno—the most published medical book in history, since some four hundred editions have probably been issued. It is startling to find that the instructions for health given at that time are most of them exactly the same as those current at the present time: "Let the air you breathe be pure—let it not be contaminated by decomposing material; wash well in the morning; comb your hair and brush your teeth; do not eat unless you are hungry; keep moderation in all things—do not work too hard, do not eat too much, do not drink too much, do not sleep too much, if you want to be healthy."

New Fiction

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Dr. Cumston does a service of value in giving the philosophy underlying the various schools of medicine, and in showing the significance of the ideas which prompted the practice of the various leaders of the science at various times. If one only knows enough about even some of the most discredited of the number, one realizes that their purpose was high and that they were simply doing the best they could do under the circumstances.

Many things in the volume demonstrate the Church's interest in the cultivation of medicine. Dr. Cumston presents the title-page of the program of the first medical congress of which we have any record. It was held in Rome in 1682 and the patrons of it were eight of the most prominent cardinals of the time including a Colonna, a Rospigliosi, and a Panfillio, all of old Roman families strong in the Church tradition.

JAMES J. WALSH.

Shoot!, by Luigi Pirandello; translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

THIS latest work of Pirandello, as it comes to us in the limpid and flexible translation of Mr. Scott Moncrieff, exhibits those traits which we have come chiefly to associate with the dramatic metaphysician from Italy—his baffled sense of the unseizable nature of reality; his almost brutally violent detachment from his characters, whom, nevertheless, he studies with morbid avidity; the mathematical perfection of his dénouement, which is too logical to be human. It exhibits, also, the same sort of unity as prevails in Pirandello's plays, in spite of their almost obsessed concern with the conflicting aspects of actuality—the unity which is derived from the presence of what may be called a "centre of intelligence," to which these aspects are all referred, and from which, frequently, their resolution emanates. And it exhibits, in addition, a something at least partly new, a variation of Pirandello's pessimism in the direction of, apparently, a greater explicitness than he has heretofore employed. He has always been a plaintiff at the bar of cosmic justice, but the identity of the defendant has been obscure; or, at any rate, the outlines of the defendant have been more discernible to the eye of the mystic and metaphysician than to the eye of the sociologist. But here, in Shoot!, one reads words like these:

". . . at times it seems to me so impossible to believe in the reality of all that I see and hear, that being incapable, on the other hand, of believing that they are all doing it as a joke, I ask myself whether really all this clamorous and dizzy machinery of life, which from day to day seems to become more complicated and to move with greater speed, has not reduced the human race to such a condition of insanity that presently we must break out in fury and overthrow and destroy everything. It would, perhaps, all things considered, be so much to the good. In one respect only, though: to make a clean sweep and start afresh."

Surely it is not merely a fanciful reading which sees in them a movement toward, not Brieux, and the school of confident cures, perhaps, but at least Samuel Butler and the school of intelligible diagnosis.

The conception of mechanical predetermination is not new in Pirandello; the exact reverse is true, indeed. But heretofore the predetermination has been a deliberate artistic and philosophic device for forcing either an idea or a situation to the uttermost fantastic reaches of its own inner logic. And that device is again in evidence here. But in addition, Pirandello seems to contemplate a new villain in his social scheme; he addresses our machine-civilization in terms of accusation as unmistakable as those employed in Erewhon; he almost follows Erewhon in endowing it with a purposive intelligence; so that, in the end, when the "centre of intelligence" in Shoot!, the camera-man, Gubbio, loses his voice, he speaks of himself with bitter satisfaction as follows:

"The vengeance I sought to accomplish upon the obligation imposed on me, as the slave of a machine, to serve up life to my machine as food, life has chosen to turn back upon me. Very good. No one can henceforward deny that I have now arrived at perfection. As an operator I am now, truly, perfect."

For the rest, as has been said, Shoot! presents a mood already familiar. Gubbio, the author's spokesman, turns the camera at the motion-picture studio in which the action takes place. He attends the development of the curious tragedy, attends it in its minutest detail, with an intensity which is like passion, and yet with a dumbness and coldness to its human implications which reproduces the dumbness and coldness of the instrument he manipulates. And when, at the last, he actually is sealed forever into this strange, fierce inaccessibility by a horror which paralyzes his tongue till death, it is not merely the triumph of the machine; it is the triumph, likewise, because it is the logical term, of the remote, impersonal yet suffering intellect, the "pure reason," by which Pirandello chiefly sees.

The story of Shoot!, in contrast to the tormented refinements which Gubbio, the recording intelligence, spins around it, is forthright and melodramatic—again a combination characteristic of its author. The Nestoroff, a notorious actress, wins the love of a pure young artist. His sister's fiancé, Count Nuti, hearing of the affair, approaches the actress with the design of breaking off her connection with his prospective brother-in-law. She subjugates him. The artist commits suicide, and his sister enters religion. Nuti, possessed by the conviction that there is now a blood bond between him and the actress, follows her to the studio and obtains work there. She is indifferent to his pain, for she is secretly working out her own expiation by taking as her permanent lover a coarse and sensual man whom she detests. Nuti compasses his plan of linking their sinful destinies as follows: He frightens her lover into allowing him to replace the latter in a tiger-killing scene. When the tiger springs, he turns his pistol on the woman, so that they die together—she of the bullet, he of the tiger's fangs. Gubbio, standing directly by, is stricken permanently speechless; but he keeps on turning, turning the wheel of his machine.

MARY KOLARS.

Words Ancient and Modern, by Ernest Weekley. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.00.

IN THIS work Mr. Weekley upholds his reputation for presenting fruits of the soundest researches in etymology, under a guise not only readable, but captivating for those who know nothing about that subject and care less. It is a book of etymology gilded over with solemn bantering, in the best professorial manner. Here we see the genealogies of words as diverse as "anlace" and "rile," as familiar as "mop," and as exotic as "swaraj." One is amazed to find that words with which he would little care to be associated have far more distinguished forbears than the most high-sounding words in his vocabulary. With new surprise, one discovers that "blackmail" was in olden days the payment for a highly respectable profession in Scotland, a word that fell out of use and was revived by Scott, only to be handed over to the tabloids.

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By the by, it may well be mentioned here that Mr. Weekley shows what an undreamed-of number of words, long sleeping in their graves, were disinterred by Scott, and given a totally different meaning in their new life, either by Scott or by those who have come after him. Nor is there any lack of quotation from our best-beloved writers: the Englishman will be grieved to find Swift casually using the adjective "bloody" in a letter to Stella, and Richardson, as casually, in Pamela; others will reap joy upon finding Evelyn cut to the quick at seeing Charles II having "a very familiar discourse" with "Mrs. Nelly, as they called an impudent comedian"; and Pepys, chasing all over England to satisfy his passion for the newly-imported "Polichinello" shows.

Now, as an interlude, I shall show how four of the words Mr. Weekley discusses have had histories strangely similar to four well-known family-histories, of fiction if not of life. First is the history of the stalwart citizen whose son is a wealthy ne'er-do-well; so the word "story" could once be used by a divine like Robert South of the "good book" itself, but now means no more than a flapper's fib. Then is the weakling whose son becomes a heavyweight champion; such is "disease," which originally meant but slight discomfort, and now is a dread term to conjure with. Another story is that of the slave whose son becomes the king's favorite; so it is with "marshal," at first a horse-knave, now the chief of the French army. Finally, there is the "shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves" tale, as seen in "sergeant," first meaning servant, then a major in the army, and now a mere non-com.

This book is indeed a "Paradyse of Dainty Devises," where each may taste with relish his especial food. But, above all, do I recommend to those without much knowledge of etymology, the article on "bourgeois," where Mr. Weekley pictures the sad downfall of that once noble word, at the hands of "the Beau-monde, Bohemia, and Bolshevia"; that on "Robot," with its charming discussion of how all modern synonyms for "work" once meant "torture"; and that on "superman," with its keen satire on the word which "in a verbal chamber of horrors might reasonably claim the preëminence accorded to the late Mr. Charles Peace at Madame Tussaud's."

RICHARD LINN EDSALL.

Preaching in Mediaeval England, by G. R. Owst. New York: The Macmillan Company. $7.00.

THIS work is an attempt to remedy the neglect of the texts of mediaeval sermons on the part of English historians and archivists, as well as to give a picture of the period during the later middle-ages in England. The author has produced a scholarly work which cannot be commended too highly for its laborious investigations into this field of historical research. He has also displayed throughout a commendable sense of fairness in treating a subject which quite naturally would lead a less balanced mind into a lack of tolerance. He is as fair as he is learned.

Two questions arise on its persual. The first is as to how far the author has correctly estimated the state of preaching in the period under discussion. As he notes, the controversy over the extent of pre-Reformation preaching is an old one reaching back to the seventeenth century and extending to our own when Cardinal Gasquet has taken up the defense of the parish priests in the question of fulfilling their duty to preach to their people. The author does indeed bring forth a mass of evidence that seems to make this defense now appear less strong than when first put forth. But, with all due respect to his learning, he impresses the reader as giving a rather one-sided

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view—the pessimistic. Somehow or other, one cannot help feeling that a more favorable judgment could be given by any opposing special pleader. This is said with allowance for an evident decline in preaching as in all religious life in the period discussed.

Secondly, how far are we to accept sermons or the lack of them as indexes of the religious conditions of the period? Undoubtedly they can be used as indexes, but with extreme caution. Preachers are notoriously fervid and liable to a pessimistic view of conditions. For instance, would a future historian (some 600 years from now) be justified in estimating contemporary society by the rather lurid sermons now appearing in our Monday papers? I hardly think so, unless he did so with much allowance for the exaggeration natural to all orators. Our author seems not to make sufficient allowance.

Moreover, the title of the book is unfortunate. The author calls it in large print, Preaching in Mediaeval England, and then adds in smaller print, C. 1350-1450. Now, this will be misleading to the average reader who will take the book by its big title as a description of preaching throughout the entire period of the so-called middle-ages, and this will lead him into the error of thinking that preaching in the entire period was as bad as the author makes it appear from 1350 to 1450, and that religious life was correspondingly low.

And lastly, there should ever be kept in mind something which a non-Catholic does not easily grasp, namely, the fact that in Catholic (hence mediaevel) religious life the Mass takes precedence over the sermon, however important the latter also may be: also that an immense amount of real piety finds expression in practised devotions, not words. All this, it would seem, should make a student of mediaeval history cautious (as has been said) in estimating the spoken sermon as an index of Catholic religious fervor at any epoch past or present.

There is, however, sufficient evidence in this volume and elsewhere to convince us that the secular clergy in the later middle-ages did not give to their people sufficient instructions in the doctrines and practices of their faith. Their neglect to do so opened the way to their flocks to listen to the teachings of Lollards and other free-lance dispensers of the Divine Word. In many of our churches today, the clergy might learn from the pages of this book and from subsequent events in England to give at least ten minutes' solid instruction to the vast congregations that are present at the low Masses in our city churches.

However, all in all, the book of Mr. Owst is a notable contribution to mediaeval history and, in addition, is intensely interesting in spite of a too often cumbrous and difficult style.

WILLIAM F. MCGINNIS.

Sylvia of the Minute, by Helen R. Martin. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.00.

Clad in Purple Mist, by Catherine Dodd. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.50.

WITH the trite plot of a title sold for American money through an arranged marriage which is blocked by the nobility of the young people; with the son of a rich father too noble to enjoy the ill-gotten luxury of the parental home; with an up-to-the-minute heroine whose principal characteristic is a scrupulous avoidance of truthfulness, Mrs. Martin has concocted a most engaging story. All the stock ingredients are present, including the simple country maiden who might have been the victim of the worthless son of the rich man if she had not been—but that would be giving the secret away. The book is clever and is full of fun. It affords two hours' entertainment that will leave no aftermath of regret; surely something to be said of a novel of its type today.

The story opens with a love-scene enacted on a Pennsylvania hillside between St. Croix Creighton, a fastidious, wealthy young man, who prizes his ancestral tree, and a beautiful but apparently ignorant Dutch girl. Her stupidity is too perfect to be true. She sometimes makes St. Croix realize this; for example, when he asks her condescendingly if she would like to be treated as if she were a fine lady and she answers, "No, I'd like you to treat me as if you was a fine gentleman." There she is, our heroine, always clever, always able to keep the reader guessing. She teaches in the little red schoolhouse, and the way in which she leads the stolid Dutch children through the mazes of romantic literature ought to win for her a place among heroines who dare to be original.

Among the British Isles there is one toward which you sail through a purple mist until at last a corner of the veil is lifted to show you faint outlines of blue mountains, emerald patches of meadowland, and grey rocks standing out of the blue sea. This little island is like a little book "full of a hundred tales." Because of the approach to the Isle of Man, Catherine Dodd has named her novel Clad in Purple Mist. She takes us back a hundred years and makes us live the life of the simple country-folk on the island, with a wealth of fairy lore and detailed incident of real life inextricably intermingled. We visit a ruined chapel, sad witness of the monks long since driven away, and when we come out we see a fairy on a flower or a witch lurking in the shadows of a gnarled tree.

The novel tells the story of beautiful Mollie and her love for Stephen Fannin, a love that makes her glad to be poor and to do hard work, because thus she can show her love; a love that makes her follow him to Australia when he is sent there on a convict ship for a crime he did not commit. Miss Dodd already displayed her power to create strong fine women in her first novel, The Farthing Spinster, as well as her genius in creating atmosphere. In the novel, Clad in Purple Mist, she has outclassed even herself.

SISTER M. ELEANORE.

A Wayfarer in Sweden, by Frederic Whyte. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.00.

RECENTLY there have been several excellent studies of Sweden and its invitation for the tourist, and among these books Mr. Frederic Whyte's may be given a distinguished place. His work is, of course, merely the point of view of the traveling Englishman which our American publishers are so prone to spread across America; yet the mind of the author is very finely attuned to his subject and his knowledge of things Swedish adequate enough to carry valuable hints in history, art, and contemporary observation to a large reading public.

The arrangement of the book is intelligent and clever. An opening discussion on Swedish and English manners and methods of thought is followed by a study of Visby and the ancient glories of its Gotland. Over southern Sweden we travel with Selma Lagerlof's boy-hero, Nils Holgerson; in the story of Charles XII we accompany the studies of Voltaire; in reading of Queen Christina, the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, we are introduced to the fascinating journal, 1653-1654, of the British Ambassador Bulstrode Whitelocke; of art we learn the story of Anders Zorn and Carl Larssen. There is also a very timely chapter on English writers and Swedish readers, discussing the character of the authors who are most industriously distributed in Swedish homes.

THOMAS WALSH.

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"There is something ominous," said Euphemia, raising her eyes from a manuscript and looking nervously around, "there is something ominous about the peace that seems to have settled on this library. It's an unnatural calm."

"That's true," remarked Britannicus, putting aside his book. "We've been here for two hours, and there hasn't been an argument yet."

"Ah," said the Editor, who had been looking over a book of essays, "I have been successful then."

"What do you mean?" inquired Britannicus.

"My dear Britannicus, I have long deplored the contentious spirit that too frequently seems to manifest itself in this library. Too often have sounds of discord reached me in my inner sanctum. Raucous laughter, angry words, and—I dislike even to voice the suspicion—sometimes what sounded strangely like flying books—have come to me over the open transom. So I determined what was needed here among you children was the presence of poise and dignity—et me voilà!"

"You've been like a soothing syrup," agreed Euphemia. "But it can't last. I have a premonition that a storm is about to break."

At this precise moment there was a sound of scuffling at the door, which was flung abruptly open, and a large bottle of ink came hurtling dangerously near the Editor's head, crashing noisily to the floor. As the dark fluid spread in a pool about the feet of the inmates, Dr. Angelicus, waving his arms in wrath, bore down upon them, to be followed by a somewhat shamefaced Primus Criticus.

"There," cried the Doctor, pointing dramatically to the puddles of black, "that much for your ink, Primus Criticus! If I weren't a mild-mannered man, I should have flung it at your head!"

"But why pick on me?" inquired the Editor meekly, wiping off the spots that had splattered on his coat.

"I'm sorry," apologized the Doctor. "I didn't know you were here."

"And as for us," exclaimed Euphemia, taking a blotter to her face, "you just didn't care!"

"I'll direct my dry-cleaner to send you the bill," said Britannicus, glancing woefully at his waistcoat.

"There won't be any bill," replied Angelicus savagely.

"No," agreed Primus Criticus hastily. "Let me explain—"

"You'll do no such thing," exploded the Doctor. "I shall explain myself. I have been the recipient of a subtle and damaging insult, and I insist on putting my case before the others!"

"There, there," said the Editor, soothingly, "tell us about it, and then you'll feel better."

"Well," said Angelicus, quieting down a little, "Primus Criticus and I got to talking poetry the other day."

"That was a dangerous beginning," admitted the Editor.

"And," went on the Doctor, "I was arguing for my well-known conviction that all original poetry should be written in longhand and ink, and not pounded out on a typewriter."

"And I," explained Criticus, "maintained, with reason, I am sure, that such a notion was mere old-fashioned fogyism."

"Exactly," went on the Doctor, "whereupon you drifted suddenly from a tone of bitter acrimony to one of honeyed compliment. Had I been a less honest and unsuspicious person, I might have known your dark and sinister mind was plotting something heinous."

"Which was?" encouraged the Editor.

"Criticus," resumed the Doctor, "began to compliment me

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highly on my—er—flair for turning a sonnet. He said he agreed with me that my sonnets, at least, should be written in ink. He further declared that he would make me a gift of some extraordinarily fine imported ink which he had, and which he claimed was of such a superior quality that it was the only ink quite suitable for the transcribing of my sonnets."

"And that is how you treated his gift?" inquired the Editor, reprovingly eyeing the shattered bottle.

"Wait!" exclaimed the Doctor. "You haven't heard the crowning insult he perpetrated. For my part, in perfectly good faith, I accepted the bottle graciously and took it home, where it was my intention to pen a very fine sonnet that has been in my head for some time. I carefully selected this piece of fair paper which you see before me, and inscribed on it an octave and a sestet, which I am convinced were of incomparable beauty. My intellectual labor finished, I flung myself on my couch for my night's repose. This morning, on awakening, I hurried to my desk to read over, and rejoice in, the sonnet I had written the night before. But what was my horror, gentlemen, to find facing me a perfectly blank piece of paper! The ink characters had completely disappeared in the night."

"Just a little innocent joke," explained Primus Criticus.

"Innocent joke!" expostulated the Doctor. "When you said it was the only ink in which my sonnets should be written!"

"Now that wasn't exactly kind," remonstrated the Editor.

"Perhaps not," admitted Criticus, "but you may be sure I had some justification. Not long ago the Doctor handed me a pass to a certain recently-produced play, together with unctuous compliments on the quality of my dramatic criticism. He said that the play was of such an arresting character that I was the only critic in New York capable of reviewing it adequately. I accepted the pass with pleasure, and on the evening appointed, I invited a friend to accompany me. We arrived at the theatre—to find it in total darkness, and on inquiry ascertained that the play had closed the previous evening. Having invited my friend, there was nothing to do but to go to another theatre, and pay an exorbitant price for the only two seats that remained unsold at that late hour. Moreover, I discovered later that the Doctor had advance information regarding the closing of that play!"

During this discourse, Dr. Angelicus had been edging nearer and nearer the door.

"What have you to say?" demanded the Editor.

"Nothing," said Angelicus meekly, with his hand on the knob. "I'm like March. I came in like a lion, and," said he as he vanished, "I go out like a lamb."

—THE LIBRARIAN.

CONTRIBUTORS

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS, formerly in the American diplomatic service, is a writer on foreign affairs.

REV. JOHN K. SHARP is a member of the diocese of Brooklyn, New York.

MARGARET PINCKNEY ALLEN is a writer of short stories for the magazines.

MORTON ZABEL is a member of the English department of Loyola University, Chicago.

JOHN STAPLETON is an English writer on foreign affairs.

DOROTHY FRANCES GURNEY is an English poet.

PHYLLIS MCGINLEY is a contributor of poetry to American periodicals.

KATHRYN WHITE RYAN, poet and critic, is the author of Golden Pheasant and Other Poems.

MAURICE DOOLING is an attorney of San Francisco, California.

MARGARET TOD RITTER is a contributor of poetry to American magazines.

HAROLD VINAL, poet and publisher, is the editor of Voices.

PADRAIC COLUM is the author of The Road Round Ireland.

JAMES J. WALSH, M.D., is the author of The Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries.

MARY KOLARS is a critic of literature for American magazines.

RICHARD LINN EDSALL is a New York critic.

RT. REV. WILLIAM F. MCGINNIS, the president of the Catholic Truth Society, is a member of the diocese of Brooklyn, New York.

SISTER M. ELEANORE, C.S.C., is the author of The Troubadours of Paradise.

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